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## *Papers*

**TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**

**Issue 44-45**  
**April 1984**  
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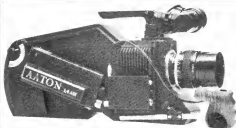
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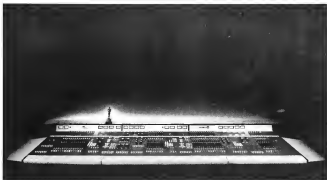
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Colorfilm 

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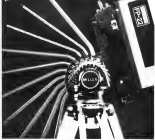
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in film and television but also a commitment in film culture, the pursuit of quality and innovation, and the commercial viability of the investments it will fund.

Although Film Victoria has, under its legislation, the power to fund and produce the policy efforts, its activities will be seen on their face in the short term. This document does not reflect the opposition expressed by its many people in film and television production in Victoria and the role of Film Victoria becoming a production house. The view was put strongly, both across the spectrum of the industry, that Film Victoria could not resist producers who actively competing with them.

Presently, Film Victoria has investments in several television programs, including *The Axiom* (Scott Barrow and John O'Leary), *Return from Paradise* (Roger Samson and Françoise Le Marquis and A Thousand Sides) (D. Thompson and Ross Green). Two features films in which Film Victoria is a significant investor are presently in pre-production: *My First Kiss* (Paul Cox and Jane Gubbay) and *The Wrong World* (Jan Pringle and John O'Leary).

Film Victoria believes it is better placed financially than it has been in the past. The Victorian Government more than doubled Film Victoria's budget in September 1982 and this has enabled it to expand its staff by 40 per cent. Film Victoria is about to appoint seven new staff members, two of whom will be a creative development officer whose principal responsibility will be to work with producers and include advice furnished in the proposal at this time.

Film Victoria has recently made grants to several 50th culture organizations including the Australian Film Institute, the Australian Teachers of Motion Pictures and the Melbourne Film Festival, in addition to the Victorian Government with these funds it is able to set up a number of the program it has set for itself in the policy, research, and funding a responsibility for the development and maintenance of film culture in the state.

### National Screenwriters' Conference

The AFC has been investigating the feasibility of holding a National Screenwriters' Conference in an annual event.

A proposal has been prepared by the AFC for the co-operation, Margaret Mc-

Grath, which suggests that the Conference be sponsored jointly by government funding bodies and partly through private sponsorship. The Conference will be open to Australian filmmakers, their professional supervisors, and related organizations with preference given to experienced and established writers.

The AFC has opened funding for Stage 1 of the Conference, which is the final of two sub-conferences—one in Melbourne and one in Sydney to develop the proposal and form steering committee. The first will be Sydney on February 28, 1983, and the second will be in Melbourne on March 13, 1983.

### AFPS Council Approves

Rob Weir, a Melbourne film producer, has been appointed to the council of the Australian Film and Television School by the Governor-General. Sir Ninian Stephen. The appointment is of five years by the Governor-General, for a three-year term.

Weir is co-producer of *The Gipsy* (1982) and producer of the critically acclaimed *Wentworth* (1981). He is also director of *Penelope* (1981) and *Jeffrey* (1982) and John O'Leary on the ground. The position to the 18th number has been vacant since July 1982.

### Film Festival

The Melbourne Film Festival has appointed Paul Sato as its new executive director. Sato has been involved in production since 1970 and has produced, including *The Glass of Amnesia* (1981), *Smith* (1981) and *Smith* (1981) and some first grade producers and was manager for two years of the state union (MBSF) in Sydney.

The program consultant for the festival is David Gordon who until 1982 was director of the Sydney Film Festival for nearly 10 years. Gordon is now a director and producer of film for Channel 5. The new director of the Sydney Film Festival is Paul Weir who was executive director of the National Film Theatre from 1977 to 1979, and on several occasions at the Australian Film Commission from 1980 until his appointment to the Film Festival.

The Melbourne Film Festival will run from June 1 to June 15 at the new State Theatre in the Melbourne Film Centre. In addition to its usual program of short films, the festival will include screenings of *Force Five* to the film judged to have distributed significantly in the range of recent years. Tickets will be available from \$2.00. Agents in Melbourne and elsewhere are available by phoning (03) 417 5111.

In Sydney, the Film Festival will run from June 1 to June 24 at the State Theatre and the Greater Union Theatre. Australian Short Film being held on the first day. The Festival, however, June 1 to 1983 has been delayed by the fact that public bookings are now open and can be made by phoning (02) 255 2555 or through P.O. Box 25, Sydney 2001.

### Head of Full-time Program

The Australian Film and Television School has appointed Regis Allen to head of the Full-time Program, succeeding Robert Thomas who will return to professional practice when the 1984 graduation class is the end of film.

Allen began his professional career in the theatre as an actor, stage manager and a writer, and was later an executive producer of television at the University of Mexico. Since studying film at Mexico's Centro de Investigacion de Peliculas Cinematograficas, he has written, produced, photographed, and directed film and television series, documentaries, features and short films.

Allen migrated to Australia in 1972 working as a director for the Videoflex Corporation in Sydney and the Film House in Melbourne before setting up his own production house in 1976.

Allen now assumes responsibility for the AFPS's full-time training course in screenwriting, production, cinematography, directing, editing, sound and editing.

### Compendium

In issue No. 49, May/June 1983, a 125-Scott Brown's article entitled "Good for Nothing" by David McDonald on the subjects. The author's name is David McDonald. Cinema Papers apologizes to the editor.

### Contributors

**Philip Adams** is a film producer and editor, and the Australian Film Commission.

**Rod Whitt** is a lecturer in film at the Philip Institute of Technology.

**Kevin Burnett** works as a Contract Producer in the production department.

**Keith Connolly** is the film critic for *The Herald* in Melbourne.

**Dan Egan** is a freelance journalist and film reviewer.

**Andrew Gilmour** is a film producer and has been a contributing editor of *Cinema Papers*.

**Brian McPhee** is a lecturer in English at Cinema Institute and is currently completing a doctorate in Cinema at Victoria University, England.

**Geoff Meyer** is a lecturer in film at the Philip Institute of Technology.

**Joe Schubert** is a journalist at *The Age* in Melbourne.

**Victoria Steele** works in the distribution division at the AFC and is the editor of *Australian Independent Film*.

**Arnold Zable** was a lecturer in social research at the University of Melbourne and is now a freelance writer and filmmaker.

### Refer to Credit Counsel on p. 19



## Notice to Readers

The directors of Cinema Papers Pty Ltd, the former publishers of *Cinema Papers*, express their regret to all readers, particularly subscribers, for the lengthy delay between issues. As several newspaper stories have indicated, Cinema Papers was faced with serious financial problems in mid-1983 and, until these were resolved, publication had to be ceased.

Due to a recently finalized funding arrangement with the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and Film Victoria, *Cinema Papers* is returning to the newsstands with a renewed vigour and confidence in the future. A public company, MTV Publishing Limited, has been formed to publish the magazine, in an arrangement in accord with AFC and Film Victoria philosophies.

It must be stressed that the magazine's independence is unimpaired by the new arrangement. As with investments in film production or distribution, there has been no attempt at creative interference. The magazine is free to pursue its editorial policies as the editor sees fit.

With the new company structure will soon come another editor, and a fresh examination of the approach and production of the magazine. Decisions made in the next few months will affect the form of *Cinema Papers*.

While regretting the magazine's absence from the newsstands during the past few months, the publishers feel confident that the new accord sees *Cinema Papers* in a much stronger position. The future is certainly bright.

Scott Murray



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# Voyages of Discovery

---

David Stevens interviewed by Debi Enker

David Stevens' second feature, *Undiscover*, again demonstrates the director's capacity to inject humor and humanity into a script as densely populated, if not as sharply observed, as *The Clinic's*. The glossy, romantic tale of the rise of an underwear business in the 1920s adds a new dimension of decor-laden style to a body of film and television work characterized by a continuing interest in the exploration of Australian history and society.

Like a number of his contemporaries, who alternate between film and television projects, Stevens began his training in Australia at Crawford Productions, directing episodes of *Hastings* during the final, "golden years" of the series. He reflects on his work there with pride and a conviction that the shift in emphasis from car chases to character studies, engineered by producer Henry Crawford during the last years of the program, created a diverse and exciting framework that has since been largely ignored or vastly underrated. He believes the Crawford's apprenticeship provided a formative and invaluable environment for experi-

mentation with narrative structure and style for a group of directors, including Igor Anzov, Paul Eddes, Simon Wincer, Kevin Doherty and George Miller (*Snowy River*).

Stevens' work at Crawford's includes writing and directing on *Division 4*, *Mafick*, *Solo One*, *The Sullivans* and the telefeature *The John Sullivan Story*, which he jokingly refers to as "*Where Eagles Dare on \$130,000*". Convinced that attitudes within the film industry to people who work in television are "nothing", he sought a feature film credit and, after unsuccessful attempts to get *Rusty Bugles* and *The Two of Me* into production, became a co-writer on *Breaker Morant*.

Stevens then returned to television to direct *A Town Like Alice* and the second episode of *Women of the Sun*. If awards can be regarded as an indication of accomplishment, Stevens has an impressive list to his credit, including an Apsa for *The Sullivans*, an Academy Award and an Australian Film Award for *the Breaker Morant* screenplay, and a Logie and Entry for *A Town Like Alice*.

Has the world-wide success of "A Town Like Alice" affected your career?

Look at me. I live in a little house in the Kibbi and I love it, and I've even turned down very well paid work in Hollywood. I don't want to make a film there just for the sake of it.

But a problem that arose from *A Town Like Alice* was that too many producers saw it and psycho-logical me as a soft, romantic filmmaker, with a strong sense of realism. I made *The Clinic* with that. I didn't want to go on making *A Town Like Alice* again and again. I wanted to do something that would be perceived as totally different, though I happen to think that *The Clinic* isn't that soft, romantic love-in-it-as *A Town Like Alice*.

After "Alice", your career has taken a different direction: two features...

The biggest influence you can reach, when you do E.T. or Star Wars, is through television. So if you are interested in the communication of ideas, television is the place to work. If you do a film it has to be something that you can't do on television, because of its spectacle, or because it needs a bigger screen or has a more restricted audience. *The Clinic* has now been bought for television, but, if I had tried to set it up for television, I wouldn't have had a day's show.

Was your background in television a good preparation for directing features?



Apprentices director Libby (Christine Pridmore) and American producers meet Michael Pate (Michael Pate). Undercover

Magnificent. I really feel sorry for anybody who does not have that load of experience before he goes on the boards to direct his first 52 million film. *Homicide* ought to be thank on our feet, to think very fast and experienced. We tried all sorts of things. I remember doing one program in which I went for long, continuous, fixed takes all the time and then another in which I decided I would cover more the camera once. We played games with structure and with performance, with comedy and with tragedy. It was a phenomenal advantage to have.

When we came to make *The Clinic*, I decided that it would be a very water film, with reasonably long takes. It wasn't a decision I had to be so down and thank about. I believed that the characteristics were parameters in the film, any attempt to throw the camera all over the set would have distracted from the simple purity of the script and the characteristics, which is what the film is all about.

In relation to this, how would you describe "Undercover"? Although you would have to make some concessions for the medium, it seems to be a production that could be suitable for television...

It probably will be, but that is not why it was made. I had written *Breaker Morant*, I had filmed what is perceived as an Australian epic novel and I was doing *The Clinic*, which I knew would be perceived as a problem film. I believed I should follow it with something more mainstream. I wanted to work with a big budget. I wanted to do something that is, in the best sense of the word, camp.



David Stevens (John Watson), a man with a vision of Australia. David Stevens' Undercover

I think Australian, internal film are largely very po-faced, and I include *Breaker Morant* in that category. Some Australian films take themselves altogether too seriously. Art should be taken seriously but it should also be witty, scathing, moving and surprising. I wanted to do something that had a sense of fun and jollity about it.

When the script of *Undercover* turned up, I fell in love; it had all the things that I wanted to say. I wanted to make it genuinely glamorous film, I wanted to do something about an Australian hero that was fun. I hate the use of the word "entertainment" as though it were pejorative and *Undercover* is not intended to be just entertainment, it might be entertaining, but I would rather call it a romance, an Australian fairy story.

For a film that is based largely on fact, it actually looks like a fairy tale: it starts with the book opening, it ends with the curtain falling, and both the music and the lighting suggest a fantasy world...

Let's face it, you couldn't do a number like "From the Outback to the Ocean", where you have 20 chosen girls in red, white and blue, my dancing to the Australia Day, in a picture film. We haven't done a strict copy of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, we have done an interpretation of it.

Part of my worry about the direction in which Australian film is going is that it is obsessed with documentary that it has a ruled paradigm about going too far, going over the top and, if I had any criticism of what I did on *Undercover*, it is that it doesn't go quite far enough over the top.

What would you have liked to be different about it?

Not a lot in terms of the work that everybody put into it. But, in terms of my work, I would have liked to have had another million

dollars to spend. Then I could have put many more extras on screen.

We also had a horrendous situation in pre-production. We lost three or four of our 13 weeks preproduction because the money fell apart and most of my money had to be directed towards helping the producer, David Ellick, get the money back together again. All the departments had to stop work because there was no cash to pay them. I think we could have said that four weeks just to make it a little bit more outrageous. And I would have liked to have changed my script into the making of the film, rather than worrying about whether it would be made.

How did you cast Michael Pate for the role of Men?

One of the reasons the money fell apart was because although the Men character was American and although we had agreed to cast an American, a local actor did a test for the role which was just wonderful. We decided to use him, but the backers wouldn't hear of it. Because of the size of the budget, they believed they had to have an American as the main character. The money was, in an essence, dependent on that, so I was pushed off to the U.S. to find an American actor in a week. I saw about 60 actors and I was told by the producer I had to put three names to *Amory & Agony*.

My first choice was an actor of unquestionable ordinariness, a very swelling, theatre-trained actor with whom I very much wanted to work. My second choice was an actor who probably wasn't entirely right for the part, but who had a big come. Then, because they wanted I put up a third name, I proposed Michael Pate, a curly blond boy who had come in to see me.

I was shocked when Equity turned down my first choice on the grounds that they had never heard of him. I was shocked by the list of witnesses. They told that I

could have my second choice as long as there was no government money in the film, but if there were government money in it I could only have Michael. In effect, Biquity cast the roles I didn't.

I love Michael and I think he is terrific. He has a lovely brain coming to the film, but it is to make nothing away from his performance to say that he wasn't my first choice.

#### And Genevieve Frost (Libby)?

I had been aware of Genevieve for a long time because of her work with the Melbourne Theatre Company and with *The Seafarers*. I was trying to find a heroine with some bells. I auditioned a lot of actresses, but I couldn't go past Genevieve.

In all of your work the women are very strong, confident, and ambitious, and usually working people, with a lot of ability. Is that something that attracts you to a script?

Do you object to that? [Laughs] I think it is part of the Australian ethos. There is that feeling that men run the country, but they don't. Women do. Australian women are very bold.

"Undercover" certainly gives that impression. Even the wife's role, which one would expect to be passive and compliant, isn't like. It is very assertive, intelligent and is called upon to make decisions at crucial times which change the course of events. Nina (Sandy Gort) is also a particularly strong character. . .

That is because of the kind of world in which I have grown up. In the theatre there is very little observation. One is brought up amongst bold, striking women and, if it is possible for there to be like that in that situation, why can't it possible for them to be like that somewhere in the rest of the world?

What *Undercover* is essentially about, if you look beyond all the froth and glamour and reveal, is the need to be yourself. It doesn't matter a damn who you are, go for it.

"It doesn't matter what you do as long as you do it brilliantly" . . .

That's right. It is the most telling line in the film. Don't try and ape anybody else.

A very clever thing is done with the make-up in the film with the progression of the Libby character; she is debauched by her husband, make-up and her career. There is a sequence when she makes the big speech in the Town Hall defending Fred Butler (John Walton) and you can see she is wearing a lot of make-up. But I felt that was right because Libby is going too far: she is trying to copy



Libby writes her designs for a new range of undergarments. *Undercover*

Nina. When she returns to the country, the make-up goes back to natural, and from then on she is her own woman.

Probably the most beautiful shot of Libby is during the rehearsal in the theatre when she is wearing very little make-up. She has become herself, and that is what the whole thing is all about. You can't be scared of what the world thinks of you. You just have to go out and do it.

The women are strong in "Undercover" but they seem to end up with weak or incompatible men. The relationship between Libby and Nina is set up early in the film; at the moment she falls into his arms, one hears the heavy music and one knows what is going to

happen. But Nina and the Professor (Barry Otto), and Alice (Sue Leith) and Theo (Peter Phelps) seem to be particularly odd couples. Is it necessary to have a 'happy ending' putting off the characters?

Whatever anybody says about *Undercover*, I think it has an almost Shakespearean structure. You are introduced to a group of people, some are servants in some scenes and some are not.

Alice and Libby are most essentially at the same time. I have them in a three shot with Nina, which is deliberate because Nina, at that moment, makes the choice of which of the two is the star. We know that that Alice is never going to be the star, but that Libby is.

There is also a scene in which Alice realises she is never going to be a designer. She has already given up on her career, which was always only to get away from home, so live her life in the new it. And her husband, finally, was to marry a Tina.

As far as Nina and the Professor are concerned, that seems and sounds over to Libby. She has had her glory, she has had her days. God knows how long the relationship with the Professor will last, but he is probably a good fella.

"Undercover" has recently been seen. A couple of the changes are passing, particularly in the scene with Nina and Libby at Libby's new flat. Some of the dialogue has been deleted. . .

"What a bigger [flat] men have to give you behind."

The absence of that line took away some of the clarity of the character. There is a definite lesbian undertone in the film, particularly in that scene. The relationship between Nina and Libby is gentle, subtle and warm but that line, which is fairly suggestive, is gone, and the relationship becomes almost mother and daughter, mentor and student. . .

I have an argument. I don't approve of the new cut.

Were you involved in the cutting?

No.

Another example is the trimming down of the love scene and thus the implication that Libby is disillusioned. . .



Scene of style. Nina (Sandy Gort), watches Libby's designs. *Undercover*



The *Allegory of Artistic Creation* (above), which won the company's future and provided the stage for the production of *Undercover* (below).

There's nothing I can say I agree with you.

So, who was it with?

It would be terribly unfair of me to comment. I think you would have to ask the producer that. He did the casting.

Is Nina supposed to be lesbian?

No. I don't believe, as you must know from *The Chick*, that there are delineated sexualities. I don't believe in putting labels on anybody. Nina is a character who I am fairly sure at some point in her life had a love affair with a young woman and love affairs with young or even older men. If an interesting scandalous area is a Broadway scandal that she happened to be witness, I am sure Nina would give it a go. She has probably had relationships with homosexual men, too. She is not supposed to be lesbian. She is intended to be a complete woman.

Stanley, is the character of Eric (Chris Hayward) in "The Chick" who has presented one of the most positive, strong, intelligent and appealing representations of homosexuality on the screen. Was it your intention to do that?

Partly, but we only have Eric's word that he is homosexual, and we know that he lies at other points in the film.

What?

I. When contacted, David Eick, the producer, declined to give it (STANLEY) but he did say Stanley had been contacted as to the role.

When he talks about the privileges to the boy. We know that he will say anything to shock the boy. It is only your assumption and that of Paul (Susan Burke), the student, that he is homosexual.

With Paul and Lily and, to an extent, Jess (Giles Moore) in "A Town Like Alice," there is a process of education, whereby the character has to learn humility and draw on his or her courage and face up to mistakes. Is that a central part of your character development?

Isn't that what the process of life is? It is what the process of what my life has been. I didn't realize the device was so apparent in all my work.

I guess it applies to *Breaker Morant*, too. In the original script, Major Thomas (Clark Thompson), the defending lawyer, was the central character and it traced his development from a bushy, outback clerk of the court to a man with a passionate point of view and a commitment to a concept.

The actors' performance is all of your work appear very refined. There is an ease about them and, particularly in "The Chick," a feeling of spontaneity. What approach do you take with your actors?

There is no simple answer to that question. When I decided to go into the theatre, I wanted to become an actor. Within five years I discovered that I wasn't going to be the *Blues* of my generation. I also discovered that there were directors and they seemed to have much more fun than actors. But I didn't want to be

a field after turning to directing. I stuck with it and I had a very lucky break. I took over the lead in an important play in London and, once then, I have made up my own mind about the right and the wrong.

There are certain actors with whom I don't work. I need to work with actors who respond to my specific way of directing, which is to encourage them not to be afraid of making a fool of themselves, because, no matter how big a fool they make of themselves in front of the camera, I will be making a bigger fool of myself behind the camera.

Actors are extraordinary people. Now times out of 10 you have to find them foolish and make them feel good and, occasionally, you have to give them a smack, just as with a child. They have very little egotism, the only problem is that sometimes they get side-tracked into areas that aren't necessarily relevant to the direction being taken, although these girls are not so infrequently becoming in themselves. But, as far as possible, everything I do is subservient to the actors.

Everything?

Well, there is the script, of course, but everything else is subservient to the actors. [Laughs] An actor has to put a pretty good case for me to allow him to change a line in the script.

So, there isn't that spontaneity really when it comes to the script?

No, not at all. What is the art of acting? I have seen extraordinary, spontaneous performances of Shakespeare

which don't stuff around with Shakespeare. Why should actors assume — why should anyone assume — that the script they are dealing with is not Shakespeare? Actors are not puppets. You cast actors for what they will bring to the role, not for what you can tell them to do. And I apply that in every aspect of the filmmaking process.

I think the work of Denis Sanders (director of photography) and John Morton (gaffer) on *Undercover* is just ravishing. It was their idea to use soft smoke on almost every set, and Steve Dobson's (camera assistant) idea to use talk stockings on the camera lens. It was those men who were totally responsible for working out the look of the film. All I did was say, "I want it to look like a fairy tale."

Obviously, one is constantly providing, questioning and challenging, working out the strategies of the shot that you choose. What was lovely for me was that all the visual elements came together in terms of the make-up, costumes, sets, locations, photography and lighting. It was a voyage of discovery for all.

I try to create the right working atmosphere. If it is a happy one, we have a better time laughing. If it is a sad one, I tend to create a heavy atmosphere on the set, although, occasionally, I will break down with some stupid joke or drop my trousers, just to remind the actors that tragedy and comedy are not separate entities.

With such a large group of people, all immersed in their tasks, how can you sustain the atmosphere?

It is very hard work directing because you have to turn on an extraordinary performance all the time. But despite everything, as trying to do your best, so all you have to do is lay down the ground rules. That is when being a director is — maintaining that emotional control. It is the time when I live. That doesn't mean to say I am not occasionally bored or excited or worried or challenged, but happiness should encompass all emotions, including occasional boredom.

Your films have a range of distinct characters — the patients and the staff in "The Chick," the group of women in "Alice," the employers and employees in "Undercover" — brought together in one place. And there is a sense of characterization. They are all very much cross-sections of society, or groups in society. . . .

I long to make a film with only two or three main characters in it. In *The John Sullivan Story* there are 10 or 11 leading characters. A Town Like Alice is filled with people, so is *The Chick*, and in *Undercover* there are seven or eight main characters.



## Is that a preference?

Not really, it just happens. The subjects demand it. Lots of people said to me when they read the script of *The Clinic*, "Ah, you, it's all very well you know, but you should make it a story just about one of the doctors." To which I said, "Well, well that's fine, maybe it would make a very good film, but it is not the film I want to make." I wanted to make the film it became: a day in the life of a VD clinic, not a day in the life of Dr Eric.

But your intimate, warm and humorous groups of people create a very strong sense of community in your work . . .

I suppose that is because I believe we are all part of a community. There is a Russian film of *Hamlet* of which Kenneth Tynan said, "It may not be the greatest *Hamlet* you've ever seen but it is the most properly peopled *Hamlet*." Within the film, Elmore is a very busy place. It is a crossroad for ambassadors and traders and couriers, and *Hamlet* very seldom stands alone in a basement and makes a great speech. He is usually stuck in the middle of 30 pages with half a dozen servants going there and five ambassadors being presented here, and that is what makes it. Very few of us live alone, we are all part of the street, the community, the city, the country or the world. When I eventually make *Amsterdam* it will be a film about how a community reacts to a given threat.

## What is "Amsterdam" about?

It is the true story of some Dutch homosexuals during World War II who formed their own little branch of the underground resistance and destroyed the central Nazi Criminal Register. For their pains, 12 of them were shot. But it is not about protest. It is a society or a community denies any one division within that society, or community, then it is denying the whole community. The Nazis, in effect, believe that life is a polluted community, and that if one pillar is taken away the roof will fall down. I also believe that.

It fits in very well with "The Clinic" which also deals with a part of society that is steadily ignored or repressed . . .

Yes. And *Amsterdam* will also be written by Greg Nifan who wrote *The Clinic*.

It is also true of the women in "Alice" . . .

That's right. Nobody wanted to know about them, but they needed each other in silence. Those who stuck to the old traditional

concepts of life perished; those who were prepared to change their thinking, their clothes, their habits, their attitudes, their manners and their concepts were the survivors. It is very difficult to march half way across Malaysia in high heels and gloves. It is much easier to do it in a strong and bare foot.

I was brought up in that situation. I was born in Palestine, and then I moved to Egypt and to South Africa, where I had a tribal Zulu name, so it is very difficult for me to believe in one concept of God. In fact, it is very hard for me to believe in a society in which every single human being is not an honored individual, as which someone is better than anybody else. I have always been surrounded by a multitude of diverse sounds and languages.

That suggests an interest in the use of overlapping dialogue . . .

I tried this experiment once at Crawford Productions. I wrote an episode for *Melbak* where, in the first seven pages, there are seven lines that two conversations begin at once, probably three. Overlapping dialogue is fine, but it can lead into situations, such as those you have in the wince episode of *Robert Adams*, where you actually can't hear anything.

Obviously theatre has been an important influence on your work. What other influences can you identify?

The great storytellers in film — David Lina, Fred Zinnemann, Carol Reed — are men who understand the myths of society, men who question God.

Bill Reid's comments<sup>1</sup> compare "Undercover" with the films of Francis Ford and Frank Capra and it is easy to see the influence of the classical material in the making . . .

When people asked me what the film would be like, I said Frank Capra and Francis Ford's films. Nobody has heard of *Undercover*. It is not as crazy as a *Stanger* film but, in a smaller way, its texture is planned firmly in its chords.

The ending was there in the manuscript. It is the one thing that never was changed. It was also a bitter challenge. We shot it in two and a half days.

I also admire the photogenic filmmakers. Beyond measure, I admire the work of George Miller (*Mad Max*) and I think the last two reels of *Mad Max 2* are as perfect an example of montage as I can imagine in the cinema. I was on the edge of my seat. But I can't do that. My stories are different from his in the way they are told. I don't

<sup>1</sup> Bill Reid, "The Wreckless Game", *Gold*, Sept. Oct. 1981, p. 51.



Top: Dr Eric (David Stevens) at home. Below and a student doctor (Glenne Barber) rescue a wounded patient (Mark MacIntyre). David Stevens: *The Clinic*.

think the stories themselves differ greatly, but in the way they are told they are very different.

They are very much about humanism, and characters with tenacity and integrity working towards something and eventually succeeding . . .

I guess *Mad Max* is the same, isn't it?

Yes, but he is a lot less naive than Fred Butler . . .

Well, Fred is a great character. In fact, my films are really about dreamers. At present I am writing about Charles Kingsford-Smith, a man who was finally destroyed by a baronetcy, and I suppose my whole life is dedicated to writing, "Stuff the baronetcy."

Dream your dreams, live your dreams and be indifferent, as long as you do not harm to anybody. That is the cardinal principle.

What is the Kingsford-Smith project?

It is a rather more serious for J. C. Williamson and Miss Denny about Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith, the first man to fly across the Pacific. I took it on as a job that I thought was interesting, but it has become a passion in my heart because it is about an adventurer destroyed by bureaucracy. I find parallels in his life that are important to me as a writer.

I don't see adventures, but they pursue it, miners or poets, or they break that crack open. Okay, I don't have a lot in common with

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# WORDS AND IMAGES

# Monkey Grip

*Words and Images*, by Brian McFarlane, is the first Australian book to examine the relationship between literature and film. Taking nine examples of recent films and two television series adapted from Australian novels — including *The Getting of Wisdom*, *My Brilliant Career*, *Lacinda Brayford* and *The Year of Living Dangerously* — McFarlane looks at some of the issues on transposing a narrative from one medium to the other.

In this article, Chapter II in the book, McFarlane discusses

Helen Garner's *Monkey Grip* and the film adaptation.

Brian McFarlane is principal lecturer in Literature at the Chisholm Institute of Technology and is a contributing editor to *Cinema Papers*. He is also the author of a book on Martin Boyd's "Langston" novels, is the editor of the annual collection of literary essays, *Viewpoints*, and is the co-editor of a forthcoming anthology of Australian verse.

*Words and Images* is published by Heinemann Publishers Australia, in association with Cinema Papers.

*Monkey Grip* was first published by McPhee Gribble Publishers, 1971, and by Penguin Books, 1973. (Just offscreen in the image) *Monkey Grip* has been filmed twice: a National Book Week (1982) and by later work by Andrew and Gail Phipps (1984). The two versions are a teacher and a student.

*Monkey Grip* was directed by Ken Cammure for producer Pamela Linnell. From a screenplay by Ken Cammure, in association with Helen Garner. The director of photography was David Childs, the editor David Rogers and the composer Neill Sonness. Running time: 100 minutes. It was released in 1982.

One of the achievements of Helen Garner's novel, *Monkey Grip*, is that the heroine, Nora, does not lose hold of the reader's sympathy despite the fact that she is, in fact, a very cruel, selfish, and self-centered person. (Her first husband, for example, is a very cruel, selfish, and self-centered person.) These preoccupations — the constant pondering on what she is feeling, the analysis of what is happening in her successive sexual relationships, the sense of herself as always — right in the end to be merely someone to the reader. And indeed a good deal of the plot is written, with its verbal narrative, in essence, but the reason for this is elsewhere. In Nora, Garner has created, through the most remarkably unappealing processes, a protagonist who remains with a certain sympathy. One suspects that this is a woman's fiction, a woman's self-indulgence, in the way that, in life itself, one accepts that a whole person is likely to be so from time to time. A whole person (i.e., a character) is what she flies out of the ideal and repetitive academic due make up the plot — to use the latter term in its lowest.

In Ken Cammure's film version of the novel, the central femininity of the realisation of Nora (Nora Henderson) is even more striking. It is as though the scriptwriters (Cammure and Garner) and director have seen where the novel's potential was and strength lies, and have capitalised on it. They have done so partly by keeping Nora as a woman, virtually throughout, but chiefly through making Henderson, an actress of real warmth and emotional range. Her performance is an achievement not

unlike Gertrude Stein's in *The Mango Tree* in the way that it works so effectively to pull together the narrative's suggestions about the character's condition. In this case, however, Nora, unlike Henderson, is clearly intended to be the centre of the action in both novel and film. The strength of the film gets from Henderson's performance and from its visual rendering of the novel's ambivalence against the latter's first narrative group, but Henderson does not signify on what is at least potentially there in the novel.

It is just as well that the chapters of this book do not seek to give plot synopses of the novels involved since such an enterprise would certainly founder on *Monkey Grip*. Divided almost arbitrarily into thirty-four whimsically named chapters (e.g., "Apostrophe of the Fugitive", "Do You Wince Once?", "A Narrative Structure is, Superficially, Inscribed to the point of disintegration. It has and power make Ronald McKinnon's *The Mango Tree* look as unimportant as *Arden's*). In a somewhat, the narrative explores the story in the relationship between Nora, a single mother of thirty-two, and Jive, her off-and-on junkie lover, a part-time actor (and a full-time hero). However often she tries to win herself of the love of Jive, the narrator remains essentially looking by her to be a man. Part of the trouble is (as Jive says to her) "I'm not like you like me: when I'm off drugs, but I'm always happy when I'm on it" (p. 46).

By the end of the novel, when Jive has left again, the next probably with someone called Gwyn. Nora feels, "A funny kind of pain, dull, not sharp, spread through my body as if by way of the bloodstream" (p. 244) and, a few lines later, "instead of that pain came the thought, 'Well... so be it. Let it be what it is.'" There is just a chance that Nora has by now reached the stage of accepting her life, without Jive if need be. Every rational thought has been moving her in this direction but rational thought has never proved defence enough against her need for Jive. Though the need is powerfully sexual (and so on her part there is) it is by no means exclusively so. She in fact makes a kind of stability, a more concerned set of relationships than her world is likely to offer. At one stage, envisaging a trip north, she sees them "on the road

with Grace (her daughter), looking like a ragged family. He took hold of my hand and we stood together completely, liking each other and feeling lonely!" (p. 300). But she qualifies this image with the knowledge that she "would have had to be a mediator between her soul and Grace, between him and the rest of the world."

The narrative landscape of the novel is more crowded than the brief account above suggests. While Jove is the continuing strata of emotional engagement throughout the year of the novel's main action, Nora's life enmeshes many other relationships as well. Chief of these others is that with her small daughter, Grace, who survives her mother with very success. As well there are the women friends (e.g., Eve, Rita, Cathy) from whom she receives varying degrees of support, and Lillian, whom she distrusts, mostly from Jove's brutal measures of jealousy, and the men who are variously friends and lovers, but mostly lovers even if that's not how they begin. They include Jove's mate Martin, the latter's brother Jon, David with whom Nora shares a house, and Frances. In fact, the network of affairs, drifting relationships involves a sort of character almost bewildering in their numbers and inside more so because Garcia has not sought to characterize them in any detail. And yet there may be a salvific purpose in this: that sense of a loosely knit, not-very-differentiated crowd of people, drifting past each other, sometimes touching briefly, has at least to make these other lives an impetus to the narrative only as they affect Nora and none of these concerns in her life with the randomness of her falling for Jove. They have their brief moments of evidence, something with their various functions, then recede into being part of the general ambience. For instance, Angela seems not to focus when she asks Jove to accompany her to a birth control clinic (he is "going to have a try in sex 101") (p. 139). Angela has had love problems with Willy but they are not intrinsically important. What matters chiefly is how Nora responds to Angela. First, she is very ready to support her friend, and in this sensible crowd of people there is a surprising amount of solidarity, second, the poem that the following reflection in Nora: "I suddenly recalled the state of her heart, the way she lived with her heart heavily on her sleeve, no levelling out of the coldness of everything but felt blind and themselves" (p. 154). The insight that often into Nora and her view of her own situation is significant.

So, from the narrative's point of view, is Nora's capacity for such reflection. The more one reads the novel, the more one realizes that its central drama is to be found by attending to Nora's narrative voice. The most potent discourse in *Minsky Grip* is not the "subjective" utterance of characters but the surrounding (but far from "objective") narrative prose which of course belongs to Nora. And it is here, I believe, that the real drama of this novel is located. It seems to me scarcely possible to care one way or the other about some of the characters one finds a mild reaction against Jove, mild sympathy with Jove, Angela, but one is in that very much caught up with what Nora makes of her experience. She is not merely a recording voice, but a presence which responds, and grows through response, to a range of relationships. She is defined partly in terms of how she behaves in these relationships, partly through that voice which is sometimes reflective,

*Living in the 1970s in Milwaukee: Nora and her mother Grace (Don Miller Railway)*



*Nora (Don Miller Railway) and Jove (Cathy Tracy)*

sometimes summarizing, sometimes self-asserting, and always indirect and working towards the reader's sense of a whole character.

This is the kind of presence, in reading a novel, that grows on one, perhaps making stronger claims in second or later readings. My disquiet with *Minsky Grip* on first acquaintance grew largely out of its dissonance with its apparent thespianism. Like many good novels, it is episodic but none of its episodes are unaccountable, particularly if measured against the crude narrative paradigm of what happens next in *Minsky Grip*, what happens next is apt to be very like what happened before that is, there may have been a visit to the local swimming bath, or a casual discussion (possibly, unintentionally and, therefore perhaps, significantly) entered in as "nothing"), or a novel, or a trip to somewhere. In themselves, solitary one of them really matters and few of them stay in the memory. This is not to say they lack all vividness. There are many sharply phrased touches about people and places, but that they lack the sort of vividness one needs in order to feel that a narrative is building. Further, one remembers odd scenes but not with any exactness as to the part of the novel from which they came.

The scenes, like many of the characters, become part of that busy noise in which the more things change the more they stay the same. The impression of narrative slackness, compared just with a "well-made" novel like Katherine Cook's *Waltz in Frost*, is accentuated by the novel's structural procedures. It is as though the latter are detoured by a mimetic aim to recreate the casual, casual, more, sometimes wildly chaotic, often dreary lives of its characters. Scene after scene — and each chapter is divided into about half a dozen, some of them no more than paragraphs — is introduced by sentences like the following:

I was sitting at the kitchen table after tea when Jove came around the corner to the back door. (p. 71)  
One afternoon, when I got home from working on the pages I found Jove asleep in my bed. (p. 96)  
Peg took Grace out for the day and I went off by myself. (p. 104)  
Jove came to my house a few afternoons later. (p. 124)  
At eleven o'clock that night Chris walked in with some cake. (p. 174)  
Cathy came home from America. (p. 195)  
I went over to Port Salem and found Rita taking her swim. (p. 191)

And so on, endlessly. It is perhaps the most loosely strung together novel of my acquaintance. The disjointedness, the failure of anything to build, and the sense of nothing's being more important than anything else are, at least on a first reading, misleading to the reader (trying to discern and hold on to some sort of narrative development). Perhaps this problem is more acute in one novel in the tradition of carefully constructed, nineteenth-century, realist fiction than to those who have seen their formative years with modernism. Certainly as re-reading, the book's apparent randomness is less distressing. This may be the result of knowing that the novel affords little in the way of the usual narrative rewards (and that just exposing them) but is, I believe, really due to modernism and acceptance of different means towards narrative coherence — and to accepting modernism as part of its meaning.

There is no point in looking for an A-to-Z pattern of causality but there are other elements in the narrative that work to give shape and favour to the book. The major one, as I have suggested, is in the drama enacted as Nora's fading voice. In a two-piece, forward-curving-back fashion, she is gradually revealed as a protagonist trying to pull herself and her life into some sort of manageable shape. One's chief interest is concentrated in this rambling but oddly compelling and caustic inner voice. When she finally leaves the left lying crumpled in Nora's house, she realises that one of the chief pressures of her life is that she "was jostling them all from each other" (p. 72). Sometimes her voice registers the pressures as unbearably demanding, but there are also occasions such as the one when

I was flooded with the possibility: the theatre was full of people I liked and loved and whose work was joyful to me. Child beside me, friend in sleep with, body loose from dressing and laughter. Censorship? Not a white (p. 118)

It is a value which establishes itself as better so that it is worth listening to for its own sake and for the light it sheds on others.

There is, too, a thematic concern, sustained on two occasions in connection with Angela but which goes well beyond her to its resonance. Her problem lies in how to "Willy's domesticated existence" to her but Angela and Phoebe, while living with neither" and with finding this situation "no less painful to her for being ideologically impeccable" (p. 126). Later, when Willy has started an affair with Ruth, there is talk about "breaking out of monogamy" but Angela is "too unstable to care about them" (p. 192). These two remarks (about a character of no special importance) point to a crucial and pervasive concern of causality in the novel. Nora and her friends are all living when, in 1915, the time of the novel, would have been called an alternative lifestyle. It is located mainly in Melbourne's inner suburbs and involves an approach free to the point of permissiveness in matters like where one lives and sleeps, and with whom, in experimentation with drugs, and in defying from coffee to ban to fringe theatrical and film-making activities. Negatively, it implies a rejection of monogamy, orderly households, of women performing traditional sex roles, of weekly, regular employment, of the careful ordering of one's life. However, while much of the freedom, the subverting of custom as opposed to behaving conventionally, is undeniably a response to people like Nora, it brings with it its own kinds of pressures and limits. The gap between the ideology and imperative society often lays the daughter in Nora has never tried to get David off the track — "I didn't want to hold him, or keep him hanging up, as he with him twenty-four hours a day" (p. 66) — but that momentary since liberation of the female body is no protection against the pain, she feels each time he leaves her to look for a "woman".

Behind the surface disengagement of their lives, she cannot help looking for a pattern that would help her to make sense of them. There is certainly no longer any hope or help for her in the suburban indifference of her New-based family when she visits on Christmas Day, nor in the approval of marriage. In trying to work things out in her own mind she underestimates herself and her women friends in their sense.

we'll discuss about swapping and changing partners — like a very uneducated dance in which the steps had not yet been choreographed, all of us trying to move gracefully at once at our squares. (p. 710)

The stages of the dance is in itself a sign that she wants to find, in the constantly shifting aspects of her life, a pattern, a sense of order, to which a key does not lie in the time of which the very nature of their ideological convictions makes impossible. The above reflection comes shortly after the Christmas inspection of her friends and it is completed by her resigned acceptance of the fact that "though the men we know often left plenty to be desired, at least in their company we had a little nearer from the gross malignity". Nora, then, does not lose in a way that captures one's respect: for "going to be desired" — one may call it "stability", or "appropriateness", for "the power indicates" the sort of regulatory key "big boys" while readers in his treatment of his young blonde wife. Here, the recognition, explicitly "be given".

"What's lost? Being a sucker, I suppose" (p. 63). Nora asks and, wryly, replies. Quoted out of context the remark may look positively



Above and below the bed and the good of Nora and Nora's relationship. "What's lost? Being a sucker, I suppose."



them—eating, but in the pattern of her life, with sad, meat often, without dance, and of the lives of the loosely knit group of friends, it is a constant preoccupation. It is also a question and answer that points to one of the ways in which the narrative is held together. The women in the novel are looking for a tenderness and kindness in their relation ships with men, and Garner, through Nora, expresses a need for a tenderness of affection that precludes common but requires constant care, that rests on independence but yearns for attachment. In writing about *Melodrama* and *Glass Tossamans' Therapy*, *Devote People*, Susan Higgins and Juli Matthews have claimed that:

Both novels are exclusively shaped by a critical examination of the way that cultural racism in the comparison of women is discriminatory and the situation of women in love are deeply institutionalized, and the writer is implicitly even necessary to describe them as feminist.<sup>1</sup>

As far as Nora is concerned, she is aware of the possibilities of "estrangement" and is, indeed, firmly entangled by her role as mother and lover. Despite the casual juggling around (see, to Tossamans, to Sydney, as well as endless explications, she is always aware of Garner's needs as a parent upon her. And while ostensibly securing the position of "romantic love" and what it implies for the woman involved, she also looks for some of the accommodations. For male tenderness, support, and attention in her sexual needs.

She apparently never released herself to embracing on her relation ships with love will be harder to sustain than the romance. When Eve says, "You're not — you know — don't it again, are you?", Nora "knew what she meant and could not cast a grin of guilt. She meant 'fucking or love' and replied 'Yeah, I suppose I've done it again'." (p. 46) Already, on the next page, she shows an awareness of what it means:

People like love need people like me, needing to be needed for a while, and then my cousin, held there by children's needs, I sense longingly towards as he continues.

She is genuinely attracted to the drifting life that is equally aware of her "misadventure." Much later, having arrived in Sydney at 6 a.m. with "Jaws" foul-tempered again, Gracie tired and frustrated, she reflects, "I have to keep on together somehow" (p. 98). Whatever love is, it is not easy for Nora. As Barbara Gales, reviewing the novel, claims, Nora "is caught, in fact in Jaws, but also tied justly, only her addiction to love." In its grip, despite the feminist ideology which she shares with others, but a good deal of accident and practical support, she is, as Gales goes on to say, "caught in the usual feminine bind, of responsibility for bringing up a child, of love which makes demands on her." The case she knows, including the ones she keeps with, do not make the domestic grip of patriarchal need is as less responsible for that. Her love for Jaws may be genuine and a genuine but that is no guarantee that she will not sometimes be "used" by him.

None of the other women, despite the warmth of attachment, is any better placed than she is. The book seems to me better about the girls and losses in the familiar approach to love and sex. The way they perceive with their lives, trying to square their ideology with the often chilling facts of "love habits," is done with enough humor and perception to make one see with some of Garner's deeper narrative habits. Certainly there is enough of both to make one feel the sadness of Ronald Conway's characterizations of "all the women in literature" defined up as group before-forever, and to make the present writer mildly ashamed of having not described it as an "idealized woman: mostly to be loved." If I am correct, even so it reading, find it "a mammoth novel" as Barbara Gales does, or "overpoweringly real" and "overwhelmingly filled with love and understanding" in Vivienne Schwab does, I think there are more than these holding it together that I at first supposed. And even the women struggle with the ideas of love and friendship and sex (the groping is not limited to Nora) in one of these elements which help to provide a narrative cohesion not offered by a firmly made plot.

So, too, is Garner's meticulous re-creation of the milieu in which the novel's lives are lived. The physical scene of the inner suburbs of Carlton and Fitzroy, with a variety of overcrowded, sometimes lonely houses, the swimming baths, cafes and bars, is not there in the sense in which landscape is in a Thomas Hardy novel, that is, a constant having something like a life of its own. It is a place to speak of Egon March in *Atoms of the Matter* as being almost a character in the novel. That is not the way Garner uses the setting. In it there is all, in a word, exact setting of streets and shops (like Nip or Kensington Book Shop, and in brief but telling references to Doris "You loads of walking in the beach center"), to walking

daily past the old's voluntary playground, across the city park, and up the broken stairs to the scene of every rescue over the blue groups, where [Jaws] had a summer in a corner and a heap of things he called his (p. 44)

The references both specify a real place and indicate bits of personal landscape. Garner has used it as an interview: "Another thing I like to



It was partly wonder. And everything, as it always does, began to have and change Nora for the poet.

what you find in twentieth century Russian writers, a certain use of detail and description," and she goes on to suggest how this current use renders the detail organic rather than merely scene setting. In *Melodrama*, the firmly established sense of place, and the cultural life that goes with it, provides a network that catches up the same materials in the text proper to the book, and both shapes and gives them something to respond to.

It could not have been done by someone who did not know the life as first-hand; it is not a matter of research, but of living and understanding. We must add: these people seriously but intensely working. The deeply realized tenderness is of course as much a matter of sense as of place, and there is felt in several ways. The changing seasons, too, give a metaphor for what is going on in the human lives, are therefore not used as a metaphor but as an agent for relevance: love drifts by happily and their acceptability is felt the more strongly against the short, autumnal ending of the year's moving from summer to winter. But even as it is taken, the novel's presence is placed in its center to suggest like *Never Wonder and Strangers*, in film like *Big Day Afternoon* and *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, so the Australian Labor Party's better done like a dinner in 1975 in "pushing" one way through Friday night crowds back to Paul Street to watch *Shoulder to Shoulder* on TV" (p. 174). The cultural climate of Nora's world embraces fringe theatre and film-making (Nora works all night as a "junk movie"), the Melbourne Film Festival, Andrew Sarris, and another novel reader. The tales of her reading include *Iron Ring*, *After Lullaby* by Melrose, Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* (confronting with the film version released in 1975), Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, and, as the end, significantly perhaps, Washington Square which finishes with Henry James' heroine accepting the loss of her status and regaining herself with dignity, "as it were, for life." It is a nice touch to include in this novel in the shape of Nora's life, it is very nice and to make it for Nora (Gardner's) *At the Heart of My Heart* the novel's last reference but to what Nora says. To the *Cathedral* (reviewed). If there is, however, a thematic pattern in this reading it is well considered: there is a certain tendency towards novels about women in situations of dependence, but Christie and Tolstoy recover the element of personal achievement. There are, of



Here and there: Sorvino (left) and Judd (right)

be an old-fashioned question asking readers to consider the proposition that "in a good novel, writing is itself simply a matter of book-keeping." On this criterion, *Moosehead* is a "good novel." If it is not good enough to avoid some long-term, it is extremely sharp in evoking a little and a place, so sharp and somewhat that ambience becomes a significant narrative element.

Ambience is of course one of the areas in which a film ought to have less trouble in the enterprise of adaptation. From a novel, *Moosehead*, whose first feature *Moosehead* is, has already succeeded in a remarkable manner in making the movie-maker replace Nora's narrative voice in the novel. Further, by retaining a good deal of the novel's "naturalism" in Nora's voice-over, he achieves an often startling replication of the feel and tone of the novel.

The film's opening few minutes show both strategies in action. In a series of still, motion, Corcoran sketches in an impression of the real pre-law happens in Nora's life, in an auto-mechanical sequence of the novel's opening paragraph which presents a worn breakfast ("nose, and clashing of plates, and people chewing with their mouths open, and talking, and laughing. Oh, it was happy then"). The film arrives at the breakfast table only after several other significant images: a blue screen gradually swimmers into life with an underwater shot of lips swimming in a pinkish-red pool, then — or other — lips are then shown cycling through about two seconds, there is a cut back to the pool, and then the cinema movie is the breakfast scene with people watching at home and again. But if these images suggest cheerful sensations, the voice-over is suggesting something else: "I'm sitting back you see you're already played in when you thought you were only taking the water with your tea." The tension established between oral and visual means here is an example of the cinema working very economically. The pool, the cycling, the breakfast table are part of the shifting constant life of rural suburban Melbourne, the voice-over anticipates what is going on in it for Nora and Lisa. It is a signifier, rather than the novel's which follows its opening paragraph with Lisa's short, explicit sentence: "It was early summer." And everything, as it always does, began to leave and change." The film makes its meaning more transparently, the movie-maker and the voice-over working cooperatively as it were.

Even during my distracted first reading of the novel, it seemed to me that *Moosehead* had distinct cinematic possibilities: that is, that a director sensitive to its social and political setting might make a sensitive movie from it. And this is what Corcoran, aided by David Corcoran's splendid camerawork, has done. Corcoran carefully balances very much as we find the novel's use of visual and verbal means and shows, recording studies, strong faces, and gritty, uncomfortable images and backgrounds. He has created accurately those

specters of Corcoran that the National Trust isn't interested in preserving, or that the developers haven't developed. No other Australian film has caught as well that family study aspect of Melbourne — of city — life, not in placid in the lives lived there. The film's direction and screenplay offer a way, agonizingly divided view of the characters' emotional lives, offering a parallel to the novel's sometimes painful apprehension of the gap between the ideology and the reality. The film balances a clear sense of realism, its own contradictions (less strongly felt than in the novel), allowing the supportive aspect of its defining, non-melancholic background against the emotionally dramatic, self-illuminating relationships of people who feel able to come and go as will. Sandra Hall, in a perceptive review of the film, has said:

[Corcoran] chooses an extremely ironic way to show us love affairs and friendships, every relationship is a new challenge, yet the mood is understated. People move in and out of our lives but we don't come away with an inkling of what is going on.

The film evokes authentically the committed attitudes and the keeping the women feel for something more and does so with a greater economy than the novel can. One suspects that Corcoran, as director of the screenplay, must approve of the following up (overall excellent spelling out) of that shaping thematic matter.

Nora's aggressively cheerful "I'll see you when I see you" approach to life as it becomes increasingly clear that she's like something more dependable. Her voice-over may say "All the upsides of my life lived together again" when Lisa (Ashley Judd) comes back from Asia, but, reflect as she is, she knows that it is likely to shatter apart again when her next accident to her addition. She and her friends talk so much about their emotional lives and needs that it becomes clear how inadequate to them are the uncommitted relationships in which they usually find themselves. The conflict talk along the lines of "I love you, but I can't handle it", or "It seems I only got to see you when you were something", strikes home and again a realistic sense of self-protection and suffering. Despite the phrase "social talk", the film really works very effectively in creating this impression in reducing the number of shadowy characters like the novel and, inevitably, those that are left are fleshed out by the more presence of actors. Whereas in the novel the discussions about love and sex are between Nora and any one of many (deliberately) undefined women, and some men, the film by putting faces in these scenes forces the audience to identify them. In my view, the emotional content of the film is sharpened by the reinforcement and by the use of scenes as defined from each other as Lisa (Ashley Judd) and Lisa (Ashley Judd) "something", what can begin to mean like a continuously well-planned record to the novel just a spike of vulnerability from the story to the film.





# Street





# Kids

Arnold Zable interviews  
filmmakers Kent Chadwick,  
Lugh Tilson and Rob Scott

*Street Kids* is a powerful documentary of the harsh world and the plight of homeless teenagers in Melbourne. Shot on locations ranging from St Kilda to more 'respectable' suburbs, the many hours of film have been edited tightly into a series of portraits of prostitution and drug dealing; the struggle to find accommodation and work; and the search for relief from boredom and for some warmth and love to compensate for the loss of family life. The children grapple with their predicament throughout the film, in response to the questions and gentle prodding of the filmmakers.

The film has a sense of uneasiness: formal narration has been eliminated; the teenagers talk directly to the camera and confront the audience with their feelings. The camera probes and follows them through their favorite hang-outs, the all-night cafes, discos and pinball parlors, on street corners, and into their bare rooms in broken-down boarding-houses and flats, or their temporary beds in doorways, parks or on the streets.

The incisive and broad picture conveyed in *Street Kids* owes a great deal to a combination of documentary techniques used by the filmmakers. Producer Kent Chadwick and writer Adrian Tasse spent one night a week for more than a year on the streets. Filmmakers, Lugh Tilson and Rob Scott, left their equipment untouched while they gained the trust of their subjects. They lived on the streets and in the boarding-houses with the teenagers and were able to maintain a degree of intimacy that would have been impossible with a larger crew.

From the time of first concept in 1980, through to research and production, *Street Kids* was three years in the making. Since its completion, the film has been the subject of major controversy. A scheduled transmission of the film by the Nine Network in April 1983 was halted at the eleventh hour by an injunction issued by the Victorian State Government

through the Department of Community Welfare Services. The department then permitted the film to be screened and it was shown on Channel Nine (Melbourne) at the end of June 1983. It was the seventh highest rating program in Australia that year. It is still to be seen in Sydney and some other capital cities.

*Street Kids* raises the question of just how much freedom filmmakers have to record and comment on issues which are relevant to our times and our society. It also questions the use of film as therapy. By participating in the making of the film and receiving some feedback, the teenagers were able to gain some perspective on their situation, to become more articulate and aware of the forces that had warped their lives. Through the tribulation they could break through their isolation and reach out to a world which considers them to be outsiders and freaks.

*Street Kids* is not confined to a bleak vision; it offers glimpses of hope, supportive relationships and possible ways to escape.



## How was the project conceived?

Chadwick: In a way, *Street Kids* came from Do Not Pass Go, which looked at the plight of children from broken homes and bleak backgrounds who got tossed by the police, caught up in the juvenile courts system and finally drifted into the welfare system, ending up in tenement housing, etc. These kids were haunted by the bureaucratic process through which they went and their problems weren't solved. They went back on the streets and started all over again.

The movie feedback from the public about Do Not Pass Go was how did the kids get into that situation in the first place? Who were their backgrounds? Do Not Pass Go was more designed to answer those questions, but it threw up the questions more. So it was at that stage I decided that an important follow-up film would examine what was causing the breakdown in society that was leading to thousands of kids hitting the streets. That was where *Street Kids* was born.

It should be added that Do Not Pass Go was a dramatized documentary. *Street Kids* went one step further: it was important not to dramatize but to examine the issues first hand.

## How did you develop your project?

Chadwick: At that stage I met a Jewish priest, Alex McDonald, who was possibly the only priest in Melbourne then living on the streets with the kids and was not fulfilling any bureaucratic role through a department. He would be on the streets of St Kilda every night, and the kids would come to him for assistance.

It was through Alex that I was able, with writer Adam Tabor, to do our research, to try and understand what life on the streets was like for these kids. That research



Claytona Rich (left) and Leigh Tabor (right), *Street Kids*

went on for about 10 months, at which stage I brought in Leigh and Rich to direct the film.

The film required that Leigh and Rich live on the streets with the kids. So they rented a house in a broken-down boarding house in St Kilda.

Tabor: We went there to move amongst them, to get to know them as a natural extension of living in the same environment. We generally made our first contact through intermediaries such as Alex. At the same time, the kids were coming to us; they were suspicious of people with cameras because they had been ripped off in the past.

Scott: We talked to hundreds of kids with diverse backgrounds from all over Melbourne. However, a motif was emphasized that

they were extremely mobile, being chased, far one reason or another, from place to place. So you rarely found yourself talking to a kid who came from the suburb you were in. The kids in St Kilda came from everywhere.

Tabor: It takes much longer to get them used to even get to talk to them in St Kilda, because they are in a much more precarious situation. It was six months before we started shooting in St Kilda. Whether you got on eventually came down to chemistry.

Chadwick: It should be stressed that it was important that this film not be like the serious current affairs programs over the years, which were rather arrogant and superiorist look at uneducated sub-proletariat, in which the kids got ripped off, and the public was

depicted. It was essential, as far as we were concerned, to make something that put the issues within a wider perspective, that allowed the kids to tell their own story, and not just to dwell on the more sensational aspects.

In *Street Kids* you do not see some of these more dramatic issues — heroin addiction, child prostitution, drug abuse — but they are in the film because they were a part of the kids' lifestyle and part of the problem. However, there are just the symptoms of the deeper problem, which is that these kids have nowhere to go, no one to turn to and no one to love. And that is a pretty horrifying situation, born of a set of different social factors. And the problem is endemic, built in every western city.

## In one of these factors unemployment?

Chadwick: It is an exacerbating factor. But the issue is that there are so many pressures being brought to bear on families in the 1980s that there is a breakdown in communication between the parents and the kids. It happens at all levels in society. Unemployment just makes it worse.

## If the kids were to name the major issues, what do you think they would be?

Scott: They all say, "I want more fuckin' money", but then don't we all? The issue is deeper than that, and it is expressed more often in money than in words. They feel scared, they don't feel at home, or there isn't a home, or they can't face the violence at home — incest and beatings, physical and mental. They live for the next part in a terrible time of something.

Tabor: The kids don't have a significant private life, rely upon, sometimes you believe in and feel loved by, someone who would accept you for what you are, and



not for the sake of fixing you in to something else. Being homeless is not being without a house or whatnot — that is, kind of shelter — is not a problem. The problem is how did you get into that situation of being without shelter?

This comes out in the section on Hobos. He seems to be the only one who has really found a way out — at least, transiently — through that significant other person you speak of.

Tolson: That is why we put that segment in. It would be very easy to make a totally negative film. But their lives aren't all negative, there are positive things — some sort of friendship, good relationships.

I really hate the suggestion that they are born no-hopers. I don't believe that is true. Condemns and condemns the situation and affect you in many ways.

Chadwick: We talked to many kids. The key kids who ended up in the film were those for whom the making of this film was extremely important. They were aware of the problems they might encounter if they spoke out, if the total reality of their life was shown. They were not only committed to the film, but it became probably the most important aspect of their lives at the time. It was the first opportunity any of them ever had to tell their story. From that point of view they became almost working members of the production team.

Tolson: The Sternback looking Chadwick was in the boarding-house room we stayed in. If we had shot something that day, as done an interview, it would be processed overnight, picked up from Citizens Laborious down the road and shown back to them. Roughly it was either good, bad, or indifferent. A lot of times they would say, "Oh, that was important to me, I want to do it again. I want it to go through and I blew it the first

time." Often we would have a lot of taking breath, and we would say, "This is becoming too boring. I think a way we can dramatize that." They would then come up with suggestions and we would talk them through. Then the kids would sit it up to some extent, for instance telling the doctors it was okay that we were around.

It took one month to cut the film — kids, kids and myself in collaboration with the kids. A lot of things would come and help out with the segments. We made sure they were satisfied that their segment was an accurate representation of what they felt was important to say. It seems a lot to the kids to get it serious honestly. To us, it was more academic. We were basically middle-class, and we have left that sense. It was a journey that we did and came out of the for them it was cold reality.

Chadwick: This project was in many respects more of a documentary made in this country. It would have been absolutely prohibitive to make Street Kids as a commercial proposition, to spend three years on a project in which you are making for an hour and a half of film. We could do a daily because Film Victoria agreed to finance it, and because a group of very dedicated people were prepared to spend that much time exclusively making the film.

Tolson: Apart from our conversations with the St. John's scene, and kids from other areas, we also spent a year going out one night a week to the Yvonne Young Centre. Even though you make sure not to praise the kids things you can't buff, as in not to let them down as they have been let down so many times in the past, you become very much a part of that reality, because it was just so much stronger than our pretence, middle-class environment. The experience of making the film dominates your whole thinking.

I am thankful for the whole experience because it has shown

me how important human relationships are. On one level it was just like going overseas for a year, leaving your family and familiar surroundings.

This raises the question of film as therapy. Did any of the kids benefit from the project?

Chadwick: At the time that the film was being made, quite a few of the featured characters were briefing very much, because it was the first time in their lives that people were treating them as human beings with something positive to offer aspects. If you watch these interviews, you can feel the kids changing very deeply about what they are saying. This film gave them the chance to analyze themselves in a broader perspective.

Tolson: At first, many of the kids saw being made in terms of to help other kids through the film, to communicate to their parents, or even just to do something interesting. But at some point they would turn around and say, "After, I'm not doing it for other kids. I'm doing it for me."

Chadwick: It worked both ways also. I had a fair idea in statistical terms what the problem was about that there were 15,000 kids roaming the streets of Victoria, and that most of them were in Melbourne. For me to come to the streets and talking with these kids was certainly very therapeutic for me, and I'm sure for Rob and Leigh as well.

There are two or three relationships in the film, and one can say that at least those couples have each other. . .

Chadwick: I can remember that one of them says, "You can't trust anybody. I mean things, you can't even trust your own best friend." So even the couples are vulnerable to this situation. They just don't trust anybody. As average persons with a reasonable family life would consider of the situation this street life is in. These kids just don't know what it is like to have somebody celebrate a birthday with them, or to spend them a Christmas present. All the basic things that are ways of demonstrating love for one another in a family situation are just not part of their world anymore.

Soak: It is interesting to note that they sometimes celebrate birthdays with each other, or spend Christmas together, there is some sense of community among some of them. But it is not the normal, family response.

Tolson: Another thing that comes through in the way they live from day to day, without any hope for a future. They can't plan. When you ask them what are you doing tomorrow, they answer, "I don't know. That obviously affected the filming. We had to go



Peter Kilar, producer, *Street Kids*

along, sometimes not knowing what we were to do the next day. Being completely unscripted was quite frank in a way in a sense it was up to the kids as to what we would be doing, and to what depth we would be taking.

This affected the way we worked on a technical level as well. We had to be a mobile, two-man crew with portable equipment. And, as many of the kids sleep all day, are up all night and are all over the place, it meant that if we were to capture anything we needed a high speed film stock we could use at any time. We used Fuji 250 ASA, which that proved outside of laboratory sources at 2000 ASA. We pushed one stop in processing and two in printing. Our only artificial lighting was in situations when absolutely we would use 250 was placed in a window looking down the street light house that we could shoot usually anywhere.

Soak: It was important for us that the filming project was de-sensitized, that it didn't become a big deal. We never used a clapper board, we used a time line when we could get it together quickly enough, and we got heavily into lip reading for most of the working of rushes. We didn't use a shotgun microphone pointing at someone's head, expecting them to be noticed. Instead, we used the same signal to encourage some and used a flat plate microphone taped to the side of the Narrator, making sure we were close to whoever was happening so he/she could pick up the sound more effectively. Everyone had to have their pink through the camera, too.

In this respect, were you influenced by any other documentaries?

Chadwick: One thing that impressed the kids out of this was a street of black and white films made about 10 years ago in New York called *The Police Tapes*. The filmmakers went out on night patrols with the police, they cameras at the back of the car, not knowing who was to be encountered that night. They didn't

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Charmant from top left: Sam (Tina Turner, Eric, Sharon and Brenda) Sam performs from Kula Lita, Brenda also the only for sing after Eric in a flashback to her childhood. Brenda and Sharon.



# Picture Preview

## One Night Stand

Four young people are trapped in the Sydney Opera House on the night World War 3 breaks out.

*One Night Stand* is directed by John Dailan, from his screenplay, for producer Richard Mason. Director of photography is Tom Cowan.



Right: Zoe Lister-Jones and Sharon Cameron (Ginnery) huddle in an underground bunker. Below: Fun and games are elevated up by two John Cusack. Tony Award Pedigree, left, and Jonathan Day (Hawking)





# Simon Wincer

Having directed three features and almost 150 hours of film and videotape drama for television, as well as many commercials, Simon Wincer is one of Australia's most experienced directors.

Wincer began his career at ABC-TV in Sydney before working in the theatre, then at Rediffusion and the BBC in London. He returned to Australia to direct for Crawford Productions. His first feature, *Snugglyhat*, won a special award for Innovative Technique at the 1979 Asian Film Festival; *Harlequin*, which followed, drew only moderate reviews locally but proved successful overseas; and *Phar Lap*, his most recent feature, is the second most successful Australian film in its home territory.

Wincer has directed many award-winning television series, including episodes of the highly-acclaimed *Against The Wind* and *The Sullivans*. Other television work

includes *Cash and Company*, *Tandems*, *Young Ramsay*, *The Last Islands*, *Bailey's Bird*, *Chopper Squad*, *Ryan* and *Homicide*.

Three years ago Wincer joined forces with Michael Edgley in a new venture to produce feature films and television series for the Australian and international markets. Michael Edgley International co-presented *The Man from Snowy River* as its first film project and appointed Wincer as executive producer. *Phar Lap* was Edgley's second venture, and is being followed into release by John Daigon's *One Night Stand* (Wincer is executive producer) and Igor Averbach's *The Cockfighter* Gold.

In the following interview, conducted by Scott Murray, Wincer talks about the success of *Phar Lap*, his role at Michael Edgley International and the new joint venture between Hoyts and Edgley International.

## Phar Lap

What attracted you to the story of *Phar Lap*?

It is a rather good piece, a great story. It is also a part of the Australian consciousness. When the horse comes running home in the Melbourne Cup there are very few people who don't get a shiver up their spine. We have all listened to the radio on the first Tuesday of every November, and, when you know the animal up on the screen that won the Cup, it is very moving.

To what extent during the scripting and production did you feel bound by the facts? How much freedom did you allow yourself to turn it into a good story?

Nothing was invented. I came into the project at the first draft

stage and the first thing I did was to sit down with David Williamson (screenwriter) and, after a couple of weeks, chisel out another four drafts of the script. We had an excellent scripter, but he couldn't believe how constant I was in spending so much time with him. He'd had a few bad experiences working with other people, but I assured him, "Look, once this is right, we don't have to worry."

Actually, the biggest problem we had — when I say we I mean John Seaton (producer) too, he was the one who started the project and who was so passionate about it — was scripters was deciding what to throw away. You can only show so many races and in the early draft we had five too many racing scenes. We had to decide how many to show, and what were the key, dramatic moments.

What source did you use as a starting point?



*Phar Lap, with a hoof injury, leads the race at Agnes Colleen. (Simon Wincer's) Phar Lap*



Top left: spectators and players gather for next race. Top right: "Cups" and Harry Telford (Martin Vaughan) with the 1930 Melbourne Cup. Above: Sir Angus Graham (Giles) 1937 Phar Lap

John Seaton started with *Phar Lap*, a book by Michael Williamson, a former journalist with *The Sun* (Melbourne). It was published in 1980. Michael had long conversations with David and John in the early days before I became involved. David also spent time with Tommy Woodcock (*Phar Lap*'s trainer and, later, owner), and many of the scenes are almost verbatim as Tommy described them.

Basically, we have been true to the story and the legend. Even old Tom reckons we got the characters pretty right.

**What about its status of speculation, such as the death of Phar Lap in the U.S. Did you find out new things?**

No really. The day the horse died was a comedy of errors. It was a bit as if you were standing next to the Queen and she collapsed on

front of you: what do you do? Everybody ran off to get opinions and so many autopsies were conducted it all got out of hand. No one will ever really know. You talk to five different people who were there and get five different answers. Some say the American poisoned it, others say the vet gave it the wrong dose, or it was sick, or they had been using an antibiotic-laced poisonous spray on frost trees nearby the stables.

The *Geographical* of California actually called an investigation because the film was a huge embarrassment to the Americans. The horse had arrived from Australia, won the famous race and, 16 days later, was dead.

Interestingly, the first guy who carried the horse up was the Australian vet, a man named Nichols, played by Robert Grubb in the film. He adaptively notes that the bloating of the horse's stomach had been eaten away by an irritant

poison, in other words, *Phar Lap* had been got at. But the other vets didn't agree.

**You spend considerable screen time on the rigging of the Caulfield and Melbourne Cups double. Did you ever fear this lengthy episode would turn the audience's response to *Phar Lap*?**

No. It is not the horse's fault, but that of the people behind it.

Why we concentrated so much on that area — it is almost a film in itself — is that it demonstrated the behind-the-scenes power struggles. It was just their greed. During the two weeks of the Melbourne Cup period, *Phar Lap* raced something like eight miles in 10 days, just because Harry Telford (Martin Vaughan), the trainer, needed money to keep himself going, and because the owner, David Thoms (Don Leachman), was only getting a small percentage of the winnings. I

can't remember the amount of money they won on that Caulfield and Melbourne Cups double but it was, in today's terms, millions of dollars.

**The story of "Sneaky River" is very much linked to the building of the Australian nation and the sort of people who were crucial to the development. How do you see the story of "Phar Lap" relating to Australia in a general?**

The aspect that fascinated me most was that an animal could become what we call "a hero to a nation." We are looking at pre-Depression and then Depression Australia and, suddenly, a snapshot of the problems there was this symbol of hope. The mob would trade out to Fremont and put a bet on *Phar Lap* — and that would pay for their dinner. The horse became an extraordinary hero, so many of Australia's sports figures have become, but *Phar Lap* was more so.

I have a beautiful piece of prose that a young girl wrote and sent to some years ago. She tried to explain why a photo of this horse was on the family mantelpiece and what a moment to her father. It is the most moving piece in her father's case, she reports *Phar Lap* as a stable entity emerging from the misadventure of the man, a horse that kept on winning; it was something that everyone looked up to and loved.

So, it is a part of our history but it stays you far different emotions from *Sneaky River*. It doesn't tell us anything more about our past than what we already know.

**In many ways, *Phar Lap* is the classic Aussie underdog . . .**

Yes, he triumphs, despite the odds. Good wins over evil, when we see through he has any good in the first place.

**One critic has already drawn**

— Tom Ryan, *SAW*, Melbourne



parallels between "Phar Lap" and "Gandhi": In both the horses die at the start, each, through their die to fame, helps alleviate human troubles, but their solutions to human troubles, by giving hope and encouragement for the future, is what defines them at the end . . .

It is the same with all great figures in history. It is Greek tragedy.

The first thing I felt when I read the script was that Phar Lap was so great he was destined to die tragically. I then wrote down a list of all the people whose lives paralleled him: Jesus Christ, Gandhi, John Lennon, President Kennedy . . . It just goes on and on.

"Phar Lap" is unusual for its number of emotional climaxes. There are five or six points where the audience is invited to shed a tear . . .

All those elements were inherent to the story because that is the way it happened. However, we did choose to put the death of the horse at the beginning of the film because we felt that otherwise no Australian audience would spend the whole film waiting for it to happen.

In the U.S., we are experienced with watching the death at the end. The first sneak preview was on January 28 and seemed to work just as well, but it is an unknown audience. Audiences there really don't know about Phar Lap; they are not conditioned to the legend.

The other emotional climaxes in the film are to do with the actual story. There is the triumph of the 1930 Melbourne Cup, after they tried to knock the horse off and it only just made the course in time. The next year the horse lost, but by

then you are in love with the horse and it seems that everybody else is against it.

Something of which David Williamson, John Scroon and I were aware was how the Agnes Callaway was bad to top everything else occasionally. I think it occurred because the horse really shouldn't have died with the injury to its hoof. A lot of people thought that was invented for the film, but it is exactly what happened. The horse broke down in the middle of the race and someone in his back dragged it across the line. That is very emotional.

How did you cast the American in the film?

We found all the big parts here, because there are enough local resident Americans across now in Australia. Ron Leibman was found in the U.S. He is starring in the film and was an absolute delight to work with. He had a marvelous rapport with everybody, particularly Mario Vassallo and Tony Robertson. Ron always wants to play a serious role, but the way it was written, he is an absolute ball of energy.

Australia has rarely produced more stars. Have you attempted to promote Leibman as a name, given that he had already made a name for himself in the "Snoopy" film?

In the cast of "Phar Lap," no. When I became director, Tony Robertson's name was thrown up. I initially rejected it because of the "Snoopy" association. I was anxious to find someone else. But everything fell back to Tony because he was so like Woodcock; he had a good rapport with animals, particularly horses.

We screen tested a number of people and some of them was right in it. I said to David Williamson, who hadn't seen Snoopy Rover, that he ought to go along. When he did, David said, "Good, why are we bothering to look at all these other people? Tony's absolutely perfect." That was the deciding vote.

Was your reservation that Leibman's "Snoopy" characterisation would, in people's eyes, cloud his portrayal of Woodcock?

Exactly. But I don't think that is the case at all.

"Phar Lap" is billed as the most expensive film made in Australia. Why was it shot on such a tight schedule?

It goes back to those taxation incentives. The film had to finish shooting before Christmas to enable us to complete the post-production by the end of June. I saw the first print of the film on June 24 last year; that shows how tight it was. The post-production was tight and the soundtrack was bought. It took five weeks to mix, and, at one stage, there were five sound editors working simultaneously.

How successful has "Phar Lap" been?

Locally, it has made an excess of \$1.2 million, a gross of around \$10.2 million. It has been seen by about one-and-a-half million people and is still running. Heyts predicts it will do finally about \$5 million in rentals.

2 Prior to the rental changes in the Taxation Act, an investor's maximum benefit in a film had to be limited. Given that completed in the one financial year.

How does that compare to "Snoopy Rover"?

Snoopy is going to end up earning about \$5 million in rentals, R.E. is the highest grossing film in Australia, followed by Snoopy Rover. Heyts told me that Return of the Jedi is probably not even going to match Snoopy, so the market seems to have changed considerably in the past year with the influence of video and so forth.

No Phar Lap is going to end up as the No. 2 Australian film of all time, it certainly won't pass Snoopy Rover. Terry Jackman and Jonathan Chubb (of Hurst) both say that they don't think any other Australian film will be capable of doing Snoopy business.

Phar Lap is a little disappointing in that it failed to attract the main audience, which is the 34 to 42 year-olds. We got them for a while but really it was the older generation that went to see it. The film didn't seem to present any appeal to that younger age group, though once they went along they really enjoyed it. Snoopy, of course, appealed to 64-year-olds that audience.

Why do you think "Snoopy Rover" attracted that section of the market but "Phar Lap" didn't?

Terry Jackman and I were discussing this the other night and we think the systematic appeal of Snoopy could be one of the things that helped capture that market. Phar Lap is very much an urban story and there is no fantasy, it is all facts. There's no find a great once-in-a-lifetime story that Snoopy Rover, and a more satisfying film, and that's just as any time, probably because I directed it [Laughs]. Sorry George!

Were you tempted to expand the romantic relationship in "Phar Lap"?

No, because the story didn't allow room for it. The focus all the time is on the horse. First, then the characters surrounding it. It would have just been gratuitous.

How is "Phar Lap" being handled outside Australia?

In the U.S., it is being handled by 20th Century-Fox, it will have a major release, although the initial release will be handled in a small way. Fox feels it has to be started slowly and then widened.

Outside the U.S., it is being handled by Bobbie Meyers, at Robert Meyers International. It's a very good independent distributor and is doing very well by territory sales. He will be using the American Film Market as his main push. The Snoopy foreign release, outside of the U.S., wasn't as successful as hoped, so we have used a different approach.

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A stableboy (left) (Tommy Woodcock) watches as Tony Robertson (Tony Robertson) puts a bridle on Phar Lap. (Phar Lap)

# MINI-SERIES

Ewan Burnett



The growth of the mini-series phenomenon over the past 14 years has contributed greatly to the revolution of the film and television industry in the West. The form has drawn huge audiences on a regular basis and is still gaining in popularity with producers and audiences alike as its limitations and applications become established.

The term "mini-series" has been used to label everything from two-part, one-off specials (which resemble tele-finales) with lone protagonists to 26-hour sagas of dramatic and educational proportions. The degree of confusion over this term as to what the format consists usually is partly attributable to the fact that the term has a "special event" drive power and consequently has been used extensively in pre-release network publicity.

Essentially, the mini-series is a limited run series of two or more episodes that usually less than the 13 episode block favoured by network producers, whose narrative is developed over the block and resolved in the last episode. (Hanson's comprises an anthology of work as is an episodic documentary, the individual episodes of the body of the program do not present a major resolution of narrative development but have a denouement similar to that used in the serial episode.)

Traditionally, a mini-series is shot on film to achieve the picture quality suitable for a "special event" status. It is promoted as such and programmed over consecutive nights or as weekly instalments.

## Antecedents

The mini-series format is peculiar to television. Although it is an amalgam of a number of formats, it has no direct precedent in film or broadcasting. It draws historical antecedents from the serial, serial and feature forms in cinema, as well as their subsequent counterparts in television, but also owes a lot to the genre of the epic.

The film serial and serial that became so popular in the 1930s went themselves up off from another medium, that of the popular newspaper and magazine serialisation of the 19th Century. Cinema added an extra dimension which, by the early 1900s, had created a devoted following around the world. These huge success demonstrated that strong female and popular characters could attract audiences to return repeatedly to a continuing story.

The demise of serial and series production occurred with the introduction of radio and television. People found entertainment in their homes and, as cinema declined, the studios concentrated on making movies to their again with gimmicks such as 3D and Cinemascope. By the mid-1950s, the large-scale production of film serials and serials had ceased.

The new form that could question to attract the audience was the epic. From D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) through to *Goetz with the Wind* (1950), *Ben Hur* (1959), *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and to date, the epic has successfully proved that productions of the large scale can draw audiences of similar proportions. The form established the precedent for special event viewing upon which the mini-series would later draw.

Television, at least for the first 30 years of its history, had no need of "special event" television epics. The weekly value was still very high and cheaply produced serials and series were the bulk stock for years. When not producing sports and variety shows, television relied well extended their two forms borrowed from film.

However, then as now, the serial and series presented quality problems. The episode-to-episode character and plot development of the serial generally compromised its content, devoid of scenes developed in film serials became familiar and homogenised, and irrelevant sub-plots, overwriting and generic scenes tried the patience of maturing audiences.

The serial, though allowing for tighter dramatic narrative construction, wrangled with the danger of becoming blandly predictable. The necessity of returning the characters and plot to an unaltered, neutral base at the end of each episode resulted in the formulae for plot development becoming as clichéd as they did in serials. The aim for the success of a serial rested on little more than the protagonist's ability to perform his function with style and flair, and the unusual nature of the circumstances in which he did it.

The one-off drama became a programming necessity to meet schedules. The "cruise for television" feature film dates back to the early 1950s when Walt Disney's *Davy Crockett* and other fancy creatures began appearing on screen. By the mid-1960s, the format had evolved into an important element of drama entertainment and had become an established part of television. The audience could watch a one-off format in their homes with easy access to convenience and frequent opportunities to

1 The Australian government specifies that for all purpose such episode should be one hour or more for adults, 30 minutes or half an hour or more for children's series.

do so. Even though television films were made on lower budgets than those for cinema, the show had made specifically for the privileged home audience. One did not have to suffer tribulations such as being half a second in the transfer from the tape to a studio screen. One could also escape the escalating cost of the cinema ticket.

As with these other "special event" programs derived from Broadway shows, novels and variety, the solo-feature enjoyed momentary success but could not bring itself to command the standard 90-minute or two-hour duration. It appears the passive home audience was not inclined with the concentration span or patience to sit through three hours of cinematic drama.

Thus it suffered the same limitation as the cinema release: the constraint of a limited time slot and the inability to develop more than one thread of a narrative to any depth. A president had to be set to prove the viability of the long-form drama.

## The Inception of the Format

This came with the BBC's production and broadcast, in the northern spring of 1960, of Sir Kenneth Clark's documentary mini-series, *Civilization*. This 13-part program dealt with the development of civilization in Western Europe and was the first of four, very successful documentary mini-series produced by the BBC. It was followed by *Antony and Cleopatra* (1972), *Joseph Bonaparte: The Ascent of Man* (1973) and John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Age of Uncertainty* (1977), which consolidated the successful use of the mini-series format to provide cinema documentary perspectives on huge topics.

The precedent for cinema mini-series was also set by the BBC. The process that made "Based on the novel by..." a regular cycle was established in 1969 when the BBC produced *The Forsyte Saga* based on several novels by John Galsworthy. This 26-part, limited-run series faithfully adhered to the television conventions of popular literary material and its success proved that audiences related the depth of characterisation and plot development that the format allowed.

The BBC documentary mini-series *The Forsyte Saga* and the dramatized documentaries *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1970) and *Elizabeth R* (1971) were the inception and proof of the format. In the U.S., these shows were perceived as the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), whose intent it was to screen material outside the definition of commercial television. Presented through Alan Cooke's *Martingore Theatre*, the enormous popularity of these shows demonstrated the potential of the format to the commercial networks.

The popularization of the format in the U.S. was also attributable to the re-run issue. Research had shown that re-runs of series were almost as popular as the original something. Programmers countered criticism of being re-run, saying that they could not afford to produce consistently a high proportion of first-run material. To do so they would have to produce more of the cheaper game and variety shows and increase production in foreign countries where costs were lower.

The format was never thereafter because attractive as a special event or fill-in. But the British had a practice of producing only as many programs as could be produced well. So, considering the obvious popularity of the material used as PBS, the escalation of American mini-series production became inevitable.

**QB VII, Rock Man, Poor Man and The Blue Night** were three American-produced successes in the early 1970s that reinforced the gradual exploration of the format. The NBC set out to exploit these successes on a regular basis, but in doing so rebelled the form of its special event attractiveness. In 1976, the NBC produced a weekly program called *Best Sellers*. The intention was to present the format from becoming bogged down in period pieces and so looked to provide such as Herold Robbins, *Love Show* and Jacqueline Susann for suspense fiction, with intrigue and fast as the key elements.

The resulting programs, produced at Universal, such as *Captains and Kings* and *Seventh Avenue*, though rating consistently, did not achieve the sufficient ratings of *Upstairs Downstairs* and *The Moneyman*. This mini-series, though subtle to the same formula, did very well on NBC's *The Big Screen* program. Best Sellers was therefore dropped and the status of the mini-series in a special event dimension was affirmed and consolidated.

Then in 1977 came the big event. The American ABC took an enormous gamble by programming Alex Haley's "docudrama" *Roots* over eight consecutive nights. The gamble paid off and the program made television history. It became the most popular television event ever, attaining a rating of 45, or 66 per cent of the possible audience members. It received 37 heavy nominations and created a euphoria in the American industry that lasted for years.

## Australia

In Australia, Channel 10 (or 9 as it was then) made up for a fairly mediocre ratings decade by buying *Roots* before shooting had begun. This brought led them to cash in on a phenomenon which, though not rated as highly as it did in the U.S. (55 rating), immediately opened the way of local programmers to the potential of the new series.

Australia was indeed in a fortunate position. Having access to British and American-produced programs meant that programmers could choose a product that had been proven successful in its home ground. The kind of success that kept commentators around Australia empty during *Brinkwood Revisted* in 1982 could generally be anticipated and so programmed for accordingly. Of course, this did not always hold true, as the only major success of the *Brinkwood Revisted* (1982) demonstrated.

The availability of quality foreign production placed enormous pressure on the local producer to match the overseas standard on a fraction of the budget. In the days before the tax incentive for film production, Ian Jones and Bronwyn Breen had valiantly produced *Against the Wind* (1976) on a shoe-string. At \$15,000 an hour it was by no means expensive by international standards, reflecting the fact that as Australians in an arena was an untested commodity here at the time. But Channel 7 believed in a strongly enough to take the gamble and the show's success rating, which increased from 35 for the first episode to 50 for the final one, established that a strong local market did indeed exist for the indigenous product.

The performance of *A Town Like Alice* in 1979 on the national network proved that this success could be taken further afield. Produced by Henry Crookwell at the then huge cost of \$225,000 an hour, this show was awarded an Emmy in 1981, nominated for another in 1982, won prizes in *Brief* and *New York*, and was cited by the British Broadcasting as one of the "best imported dramas in 1982".



Top: *Brinkwood Revisted*. Above: *Against the Wind*. Below: *A Town Like Alice*.




*Days of Hope: "social history in the bloodstream"*

In Australia it peaked with a 40 rating and its successful re-run in 1983 again demonstrated its popularity.

## The Success of the Mini-series

Incidentally, programmers were looking to quality television to satisfy the growing sophistication and maturity of audience taste. For many reasons the mini-series had greater scope for this quality and, although ratings do not always directly reflect the quality of production, well-produced mini-series were good for ratings. Three little numbers at the end of a weekly phone call from McNair Anderson in Australia, or Nielsen in the U.S., are the yardstick by which a program is judged. Once mistaken as inaccurate, especially by television executives who unfavourably, they are pursued religiously and their inflexible accuracy celebrated with expensive champagne when favourable.

Few networks are in the privileged position of the BBC or PBS which, because of the nature of their funding, are not inextricably tied into the pursuit of these numbers. They are able to pursue quality, wherever possible, for the sake of quality alone.

For those networks pursuing the dollar rating, however, the mini-series is a special case television that is usually good for ratings. It also guarantees major sponsorship and brings in a dual schedule.

The pursuit of quality is often reflected in the production set-up from which these projects are usually undertaken. The mini-series format, which has attracted the likes of Crawford Productions and Milford and Milford away from their usual domain, is, even for these organisations, produced from a separate entity set-up specifically for that purpose. This type of independent structure relies on the use of experienced freelance crews chosen for their proven track record and, while ensuring a creative contribution from the crew, it keeps overheads to a minimum and ensures maximum production value on the available budget.

The series and serial are locked into network or production-house schedules that often dictate compromises to keep the show on the road. Telefeatures and mini-series can achieve higher standards because, although they may

will be locked into a budget dictated, split schedule, they need be released only when they are completed to the satisfaction of the producers.

One of the major reasons of quality in the mini-series is its ability to present, in novel form, popular literary works and to offer dramatic or documentary perspectives on important events in world history. In doing so it allows for a depth of study not possible in other forms. It can tell a good story.

The importance of the strength of this format was demonstrated in 1980 when *Water Under the Bridge* received disappointing ratings (24), despite a high degree of critical acclaim for its excellent performance and photography. The lack of strong characterisation and a tangible theme resulted in this mini-series settling down into episodes of little pace where no experience of revolution was fulfilled and where the characters became unlikable in their narcissism.

The similar ratings disappointments of *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *The Forsaken Land* in the same year created a degree of scepticism both towards the form in the Australian industry. All three shows were well received by the critics and overseas sales were forthcoming but in the local market the reaction was unfavourable. This served to identify further the necessity for a strong narrative at a format that presents itself as above the ordinary in television drama.

Caslow and Jenkins, in their discussion of the success of *Roots*, identified the elements of success as:

... conflict within, first man against, effective violence, inner relationships, including sex angles, a clear cut conflict between good and evil not to be put on hold.

The longer format allows for complexity of character development without boring or dramatic compromise. It can expand on the single-threaded construction available to the feature or serial but can do so without having to pad the material of relevance, as is often the case with the serial.

It can also construct a historical event and identify individuals within the framework of their cultural circumstances. The success of biographical mini-series such as *Jessie* (1973),

*Oppenheimer* (1980) and *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* is attributable to the ability of the mini-series to provide an in-depth investigation of the behaviour and motivations of noted individuals in their particular environments. The documentary role has been used from the format's inception and, though generally accepted in Australia, it became more and more prominent as producers turn increasingly to material with contemporary relevance. Among the topics dealt with in forthcoming Australian mini-series are the 'bodily' cricket tests, the waterfront strike of the 1920s, Eureka Stockade and the Japanese POW escape from Cawra.

In this documentary application, the mini-series has the ability to present possible but disputed perspectives on a social history that drives a degree of understanding from the huge proliferation of knowledge, sub-cultures and opinion that has characterised the technological age since the last war. The popularity of programs such as *Roots* and *The Immortal* (1981) would tend to suggest the audience's desire to estimate entire periods of understanding from the information made.

So strong is the format's ability to explore social history in the documentary application that it will probably never be allowed to fully exploit this potential on commercial television. Ken Lanch's adaptation, *Days of Hope* (1974), an attempt to investigate issues such as conservatism and socialism, and did so with such force that conservative British televisioners feared that the BBC had been inhibited by leftist banner waves in Australia, the show was seriously screened by the ABC in a non-rating period.

The drama and documentary mini-series have the potential to transcend the role relegated to the status of underlying the dramatic (political and social system). In contemporary terms, the protagonist is usually identified by his social role as doctor, lawyer or policeman. The life to which he addresses himself are generally represented as extensions of individual psychology rather than social life. In retreating from, and to return each episode to its biographical base, he departs of his system but not the social circumstances that produced it. The mini-series does not have to return the protagonist to a safe, neutral base each episode and, therefore, can explore more than the surface functioning of social systems.

It is interesting to note that the Australian government's definition of the drama mini-series is 'in the television medium to an enhancement of the Hollywood narrative form otherwise'.

The less dramatic elements are introduced, developed and concluded so as to form a narrative structure (similar to that of a novel) which gives a major continuous plot reinforced by guest stars. This is the definition of an ending which moderns may prefer.

This would appear to preclude any form including anything other than a 'realistic of realism'.

One problem with the format's use for the study of social history is the potential for the over-functionalisation of historic structures. Strongly identifiable elements are good for any form of entertainment and increasingly the hegemony for the 'flood' of television is becoming so that it is impossible to ignore one's emotions and enjoy with regard the contents of hate, lust and so on. Historical aberrations make for popular television and Hitler shapes up as a fictional demon in mini-series. But the danger is that sensationalist television could over-functionalise an atrocity to the

1. Caslow and Jenkins, *Watching TV: Four Decades of American Television*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1981.

2. From *General Report: The Report on Australian Television*, September, Sydney, 1981.

suggest that, for instance, Holocaust is remembered as "the most moving mini-series of 1978" and the real story is magnified. However, when applied to drama fiction derived from novels, this danger is somewhat allayed.

Most successful drama mini-series have been period pieces originating from novels. These offer the attraction of being able to provide a point of view, which is usually that of the novelist, and the quality television which is often contained in spending time on sets, costumes and so on. But there are problems associated with the production of contemporary mini-series that have resulted in the death of such shows. Except for notable exceptions such as *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, the most successful are those flamboyant Hollywood extravaganzas which employ the soap and serial devices of sex, intrigue and wealth.

The serious mini-series relies heavily on consistency of dramatisation and character development to hold the story together over an extended period. But when it is set in a modern environment this consistency runs into great difficulties.

In the feature film, dramatic consistency is equally important and generally achievable. When there is only one producer, one director and one writer, a film may develop a cohesive framework or singularity of vision attributable to particular creative sources and deriving its merit from this.

The mini-series cannot afford this luxury. Due to the sheer volume of material and work, it is common practice to employ several writers and directors. When the final selection for the script development and execution is the period novel, the creative team has a clearly defined and stated set of ethics, modes of behaviour and environments at sufficient historical distance to act as a solid point of reference. With contemporary mini-series, however, the interpretation of recent modes of behaviour becomes arbitrary and difficult to sustain, even a publication of creative contributors. The need for dramatic consistency thus falls back on the producer who, especially in Australia, is also frequently acting as copyright owner and salesman.

One possible solution to this problem is to restrict the contemporary story to a particular, dated environment with interesting and unusual behaviour patterns. The subject and



*The Diamond: Australian political history revisited*

treatment do not have to be epic in proportion. The circumstances and quality of the drama lead the mini-series to special event status by allowing the audience a privileged insight into a unique event.

Hollywood has sales producing the likes of *Aspen, Smokey and Mountain*, which sell themselves through their sensationalism rather than their dramatic content. Apart from *Barbara* to *Eden* (1981) Australia has difficulty producing material of the epic, unique nature because, basically, there is just not enough money to mount the scale of these productions and attempt, for instance, the obligatory wrecking of a line of vehicles in an urban landscape.

A contemporary mini-series such as *Silent Bush* (1981), though utilising a unique and interesting environment, might not be able to sustain itself on the strength of its topic. It therefore runs up against the expectation of most spectacular effects and adventure on the American scale which it might not be able to

fulfil. The special event status has to be sustained, as such, on the level of the quality of the material and the quality of the production.

Another possible solution to this difficulty of the format to handle contemporary material successfully is for more writing, production and directing talent to be drawn from the cinema industry where the discipline and integrity of story construction is of paramount importance. The return of such notable figures as David Williamson and Thomas Kennedy to writing for the small screen would tend to give hope to television executives that the mini-series will stem the flow of writing talent from television to film.

There would also appear to be a necessity, though potentially expensive, for the delineation of creative producer/script editor/producer/producer roles which, in independent production, is often relegated to or suffered by one individual. If there is a necessity for multiple directors and writers, the creative producer's role must become stronger. Wherein organisations such as Crawford Productions can afford the luxury of an in-house marketing director and production representative working on a project from an early stage, the independent producer may have to perform all of these tasks at the same time as refracting the situation of having his house and thereby at least to make ends meet before the finance comes through.

### Programming

The mini-series format has traps for the television programmer. One of the biggest problems is that, unlike the serial, the episodes of the mini-series cannot be split for programming as re-run. The show is not delivery a set number of slots in a programme which, if not on subsequent nights is possibly originally programmed, should be no more than a week apart. Series such as *M.A.S.H.* can be split and programmed to suit seasons, ratings or fancy without major alienation of the audience. Even episodes made 10 years apart are programmed in the same week with success.

The performance of mini-series re-run has not been extensively researched in Australia but, in the U.S., it has been shown that they do not do as well as the series. If the special event



*All the River Run: another successful exploration of the past.*



Watchdog: Jack Thompson in Miami

is successful the first time around it becomes less special the second time. Reviews, therefore, are generally left until several years after the first screening to allow for a degree of time-on in the audience.

Perhaps the most dramatic flaw with the format is that the first episode has to do with the night or the network is left holding a multiple-existing disaster. The format, because of the depth of its development, does not lend itself to having audiences join in mid-run even with reruns at the head of each episode.

Networks generally rely on heavy promotion campaigns to sell the show. These often appear months before the program with fluffing and, supposedly, catniping, promotion of the dramatic arrival of the big event. These campaigns then progress with all manner of media promotion in an effort to have the viewer anxiously hanging off the end of his seat for the first episode.

The network has to be sure of its national base, should the big event turn out to be a fiasco, there is a hard-to-here often they could cry wolf without depriving the mass series of its attractiveness.

But there have been few real flukes recently. 1983 proved to be an excellent year for the mini-series in Australia and one which could prove hard to follow. It was a year in which the local product fared very well with the outstanding critical and ratings success of *The Bushman* and *All the Rivers Run*, and the ratings success of *Far the Town of Bill's Natural Life* and *Return to Eden*.

## The Future

This year seems set, however, to be at least as spectacular for the mini-series. Network 7 alone has six mini-series programmed for the year. Several Australian shows stand out including *Korika Stockade*, produced by Henry Crawford, and *Waartrane*, produced by Bob

In terms of production, other than the distinct possibility that the *Barrowed* *Dance* production of *The Amos* will overtake, several projects from established producers are in advanced stages of development or pre-production.

Perhaps the most interesting event of 1984 will be the \$7.3 million production by the South Australian Film Corporation of *Robt* *Boldwood's* *Robbery Under Arms*. This will be produced as a six-hour mini-series as well as a double-length feature film, complete with intermissions, to provide its television release by two years. Producers Jack Blain feels that both of these forms will be viable propositions and will provide a secure return on the investment which, at \$759,000 an hour of television, places it well ahead of the current average of \$400,000 an hour.

This will be interesting because the use of the two formats for the same material has not proven successful for the two earlier American ventures. For both *Moon* *the Lawless* (1972) and *Shogun* (1979) the feature film did poorly in the box-office, while the mini-series rated well on television. However, the enormous success of *The Godfather* and *The Godfather Part II* in the cinema guaranteed the subsequent success of the six-hour mini-series, which was cut out of the two films and previously unused material, and screened many years later.

*Robbery* will differ from *Shogun* in that additional material will be shot for the feature rather than editing it out from the mini-series. Given the proven viability of the mini-series to run well in re-run in the U.S., however, it will be interesting to see whether the audience, having seen the blockbuster in the cinema, will watch the same special event on television at least a few years later. The success of the mini-series would also appear to be heavily dependent on the success of the film release.

The ABC has had a couple of interesting, if low-budget, attempts at the mini-series format in recent years. 1982's *A Distant* *Far*

*George* (1982) and *The Scales of Justice* (1983), though lacking the scale of production of other commercial projects, were popular because of the strength of their scripts and the intimate nature of their setting.

However, Chris Mear, head of the ABC drama department, has indicated that the ABC will in future steer clear of the mini-series bull-horn in favor of lower budget one-offs which he feels allow more opportunities for high-quality, imaginative and imaginative experiments.

For those involved in independent production, the current slump in the cable television market in the U.S. could prove disadvantageous in the long run as well as the American industry. Home Box Office, the vast organization on which pro-bought *All the Rivers Run* (1983) from Crawford Productions, is currently going through a major staff and policy restructuring in an effort to streamline operations. Even though Henry Crawford sold his recent five *Mile Creek* to the Disney cable network, cable television would appear to be proving less of a bonanza than expected. The phenomenal growth of home video in the U.S. has hit hard at what was the savings of network television several years ago.

In the U.S., critics are hoping that the establishment in the past five years of non-network, independent production companies, such as Openwatch Private Trust and Microcinema, will mean a trend toward material of more introspective interest, appeal appearing in the feature and mini-series formats. Network production appears to have polarized itself into police, detective and action adventures as one side and big-city, soap mini-series on the other. Screenwriter, director and producer of the popular *Ministerpiece Theatre*, has all but been eliminated from American network programming in the frantic scramble to retain audience in the light of lower video and cable contracts.

## Conclusion

The mini-series has the capacity to be used for serious drama. The British established this in the early days of the format and it has been consolidated with a number of quality Australian, American and British mini-series. The major hurdle is to maintain the pace and consistency of the story development. A show that waffles or gradually without the draw cards of a brilliant script or, conversely, soap sensationalism is destined to the pile of mini-series flops that has grown in the wake of an otherwise successful history.

Furthermore, the special event status must be maintained. A number of promising ideas and projects have expressed concern with the risk of people, made without much experience, manufacturing interest in overlooking the tax incentives and marketing mini-series of their own. Established producers such as Henry Crawford fear that a proliferation of quality, produced, badly scripted, cheap mini-series will throw the format into disrepute and deprive it in future of its special event attractiveness.

This is, indeed, a danger in the current popularity of the format. In every mass media broadcaster's dog program on the horizon, such as in 1979 and 1981 when everyone was making feature films. One can only hope that the process of elimination by ratings test that has established the successful presentation of the mini-series during the past 14 years will create the pressure for the cable and television programmers for the continued and growing use of the format for quality television. \*


 A Dreamer for George: Karen Furlong in *Yanyan*.

Archived/Document: Rosemary Curtis, Australian Film and Television School

# On Guard

## An Interview with Susan Lambert

Why did you change from being a successful documentary director to a director of drama?

When Sarah and I are interested in a topic, we start talking to people and so, even in our documentaries, we have experimented with new ideas in form as a means to the end. For example, *See 18*, at the time it was made, was not really what you would call a standard documentary. It included some dramatic sequences.

In fact, that film had some initial difficulty getting distributed because the dramatic sequences featured four white women and, in a film that was broadly educational and destined for some school audiences, this was considered to be very radical. For us, of course, it was essential that a film about body image actually have some bodies in it, but in 1978 you just didn't do that in a documentary.

Another film, *Behind Closed Doors*, was a short one about domestic violence. It didn't have any people in it but was an experiment in film language to get across some information without having to resort to talking heads and statistics. As such, it worked very well.

*Age Before Beauty* is a much more conventional documentary with interviews, talking heads and so on, and it is very accessible.

With *On Guard*, the area we wanted to look at was women as activists. We wanted women to be seen on the screen as thinking, intelligent and active characters. The sensitive drama suggested itself when we realized that we didn't want to be passed down to a single issue, like before, but rather could exercise almost total control as users of what was said and who said it.

We wanted to show a particular lifestyle and to show women in a positive way. Then we got excited

*Susan Lambert's On Guard, in the style of a heat adventure, concentrates on four politically active and assertive women (played by Liddy Clark, Jan Cornell, Kerry Dwyer and Mystery Carnegie) shot on 16 mm and 51 minutes long, the film is a frank depiction of the women's sexuality and emotional lives, and the complexity of their domestic responsibilities. Within its thriller format, On Guard raises the ethical issue of biotechnology and its impact on women.*

Lambert's previous films, all documentaries, have mostly been co-directed with Sarah Gibson (co-writer and associate producer of *On Guard*). They include *Ladies Roses* (from with *Pet Fink*, 1978), *See 18* (1978), *Behind Closed Doors* (1980) and *Age Before Beauty* (1989). In the following interview Lambert talks with Victoria Treble.



Director Susan Lambert, right, and actress Mystery Carnegie in the set of *On Guard*

about trying to do that within the adventure/thriller genre. But after much discussion we realized that the women should be concerned about something, so that the adventure/thriller stuff would have a firm foundation. We came up with the issue of reproductive engineering which we had been interested in for a long time. It is a fabulously complicated moral issue, with which the medical and legal professions are still grappling. Anyway, as we got further and further into the writing, the issue came more to the forefront and couldn't be kept down, so we had to research it thoroughly and arrive at a position. That was the hardest part.

What is interesting is that it is not an issue that has been handled widely or discussed within the women's movement, or in larger political circles; so, whereas previously our documentaries had been in reaction to issues already being discussed, this film was to make a subject long before it became an issue, and get people asking.

Do you always work with Sarah Gibson?

No, I made two films for the Health Commission through the New South Wales Film Corporation, although I was our production manager. Rod Harte Phoenix, that was the leader. Sarah has made another film too, *Alibi* (1977), about a woman artist.

Originally, we were going to co-produce and co-direct *On Guard*. But it became too big a project and, when Sarah was offered an honorary position as the New South Wales Institute of Technology, which she was going to do, we suspended the production.

How did you get the idea for "On Guard"?

We had always wanted to make an adventure film, having both been addicted to *Yellowstone* and the *Peter of Habsburg* kind of literature, and this, combined with the frustration of never seeing strong, capable, brave women on the screen, led us right to it. We wanted to make a hero movie and have the girls go away. That's where it started.

Sarah had been obsessed and came back obsessed with the idea that paper money was becoming obsolete and that credit was the only thing taking over, so we started playing with that idea. That was three and a half years ago, the ideas not unimproved, as they do.

Where did you raise the finance for the film?

We went to the Australian Film Commission with a treatment for a film called "Katie's Women, Twisted Pastures", which was the original story that became *On Guard*. We were rejected by the Creative Development Branch, but later got script money from the Women's Film Fund.

Do you think that is significant?

Yes, very significant! The first attention both came from the mainstream industry. They were feature film writers and they simply had no idea of what we, and others, were on about. A lot of people were disillusioned with this particular point. The attention had no idea about the film; we had already made, or the context in which we

worked, and our ideas just fell on deaf ears. That whole movement was a disaster for a lot of us.

What did you do after getting the first-draft money from the Women's Film Fund?

We did several drafts and then we went back to the Creative Development Branch for production money, at which point we were rejected again.

Do you know why?

I think they thought that the script wasn't ready.

Was that appropriate?

Looking back on it, I think a yes. They were quite supportive of us in terms of being able to make the film, feeling that we were very vocal and had achieved that aim in the past. But, they were reluctant to take the risk on that script. They were worried about the movie idea drama. It was a bit of a blow. It threw us right back into changing the dimensions of the script and what resulted was *On Guard*, a much more conventional narrative, except that it had four main characters, instead of the usual one or two.

So, with this new script, did you then engage Daghy Duncan as producer?

No, Daghy had been to it from the time we first approached the Women's Film Fund. With the new

*On Guard* script, we went to the Women's Film Fund again and they supported the project with the first \$20,000 and then we went back to the Creative Development Branch which came up with a further \$30,000. But we still had to raise another great chunk of money privately, which Daghy did. We were into production in January 1985 and had raised the private money in the December prior to that. It was quite hair-raising at the time.

You said that the first lot of reviewers didn't really understand what you were trying to do, so the area in which you worked. Was that because the script differed greatly from a traditional narrative?

It was attempting to do that at the time. In the first script the story emphasis was a large group of women as opposed to one or two, or even four, well-defined individuals. It was also much more varied in the sense that the hero they did was more ambiguous and unheroic, and it didn't have the non-related content that the final script had. There was more of the business about reproductive engineering. It was solely to do with notions of crime and who are criminals and who aren't.

One of the interesting things about the book is "On Guard" is that it is quite dramatic in flavor. The mechanics of the crime are so simply explained that the film almost works as a blueprint for a

new kind of terrorism. Were you aiming for that?

As soon as we started to break down the script, we had to come to terms with how they actually did it. In the earlier drafts, they had just sort of fluffed around with knots and fishing lights, such as you see in *Interiors*, and that wasn't good enough. As we were wondering what to do about it, a friend of mine, Cristina Fermonch, who is a German filmmaker, wrote to us after reading the first script. She had picked up the state of affairs and suggested looking into the story and relationship as filmmakers, as well as the relationship of women to technology, and that started us off on a whole new period of research. We had no final say just how you would go about subverting a computer bank, not a subject that many computer people wanted to talk about, as you might imagine.

Having settled at a final script, how did you cast the film? Liddy Clark is quite well known and Harry Dwyer is known for her theatre work but the others are more or less unknown. Was there a reason for not using all established actresses?

We cast ourselves — that is, Daghy, Sarah and I — and we threw in a very wide net. We looked at professional actresses as well as women who hadn't acted before, but who were familiar with the lifestyle portrayed in the film. Liddy was fabulous right from the



Daghy (Mystery Linings), Sarah (Use Clones) and Liddy (Harry Dwyer) at work on their subversive mission. *On Guard*



first reading and Jan Carrall) was always somebody with whom I had wanted to work. She hadn't done much film work but had worked a lot in comedy theatre and I thought she would be fascinating. It was a risk, but well worth it, and I am sure it is the beginning of a lot more work in film for her.

Mystery Cottage is the lead singer of a Sydney rock band, The Stray Dogs, and she was the opposite in some ways to Liddy. She has no formal acting experience but has a fantastic screen presence; she has a totally relaxed body language that was very uncharacteristic, which was one of the things we were trying to present on the screen. That was quite important.

**What do you mean by uncharacteristic body language?**

What continually frustrated us in a lot of film is that every time women attempt to do anything active, they always seem to fall a up because they are used to physically incapable. They stumble morning down the street, the simplest action is always too much. We wanted to work around that notion, not by making a big thing of it, but just to show that, if you want for it, you can perform almost any physical feat with relative ease.

**Given these ideas about characters, what were you hoping for in the set direction and style of the film?**

The art direction was intended to be comic book in style, with lots of primary color followed right

through into the lighting of the film. It was quite successful and I think the film does have a real comic strip feel to it, which was it came from most of the European best movies which are all grey and brown. We wanted to reflect the Australian light.

**Do you think it is a particularly Australian film?**

Not so much in content but certainly in light, color and the way people dress.

**How has "On Guard" been received overseas?**

It was selected for the London Film Festival and a lot of people were very excited about it because it made them feel optimistic. I think the humor had something to do with that. And they loved the fact that the women got away with it. It is a standard convention, but everyone responded to it and enjoyed it on that level. The same thing happened in Germany and Holland.

In London, where I was able to attend the discussions after the film, the audience relationship to undernude was the big controversy. There are some scenes in the film where the women are nude or partly nude and there was a debate about whether these scenes constituted a voyeuristic cinema. Some of the audience thought that the women were being set up for the male gaze and that men would get off on it, which was of course the last thing that we wanted.



Doree and George escape from security guards during their mission. On Guard

In relation to the lesbian sexuality in the film, we spent a lot of time discussing the best way to shoot it because, although some mainstream films have recently dealt with it in a romantic way, we thought that it was important to show scenes like this in an ordinary way and not make an issue out of it. What we finally decided was to shoot the bedroom scene as one wide-shot and to have it quite highly lit and try as much as possible not to have lots of shots covering up bits of body, but in fact to have the bodies completely exposed. At the time, they are busy in bed discussing what is the best

method of wedging a door open, so it is not as though the scene was there for erotic stimulation.

I will say this about the English though, they were quite surprised to see people walking around the house with just a towel around their waists. Apparently, it is just not done in England! So, whereas I think that some of their concerns are just, I also think that some of them just come down to whether or not you are familiar with people walking around well-oiled at home — and that is a function of climate as much as anything else. I suppose.

**Are you only interested in directing films that you write?**

At the moment, I would like to do more directing where I am not responsible for the whole film and for everything everyone says, so that I can actually concentrate on the craft of directing. Despite that, I am sure I will continue to make my own.

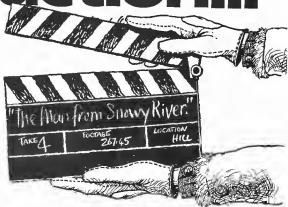
**At 91 minutes long, "On Guard" is quite short for a theatrical release. What are the plans for it?**

Ross Films is the distributor and it has organized theatrical releases in four major, at the Academy in Sydney, the Carlton Melbourne, in Melbourne, the Classic in Adelaide and at the Empire Shadow cinema in Canberra. The film will be billed with a selection of Australian rock 'n' roll clips and Toby Zisser's new animation, The Tale of Spiders, which will make a great program. The rock 'n' roll clips are a great idea. I think, because On Guard has a very strong music track composed and played by the Stray Dogs and produced by Colleen Hewicker, who used to be with Studio 54, I love it.★



Annie (Liddy Clardy) and Doree (Doree) discuss the setbacks from the local swimming pool. On Guard

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# Personal A HISTORY OF CINEMA Papers

Scott Murray

The first issue of a magazine called *Cinema Papers* was published by a group of undergraduates at La Trobe University in October 1967. The name was derived from *Cahiers du Cinéma* which, by the mid-1960s, had become the bible of the French "new wave" cinema.

The 25-page journal was run off on the commons in the Glena College office with the help of the college secretary, Kay Matheson (now at the Australian Film Commission in Melbourne). It was a low budget operation with both paper and machine borrowed from the late Professor Whitehead, founding professor of Economics.

This first issue contained an emotional editorial (see Box 3), one obviously motivated by frustration at the lack of a meaningful and significant film industry in Australia at the mid-1960s. Edited by Philippe Mora, it included contributions by Peter Bailey, Lucien Bessiere, Rod Bishop, Freya Mathison, Mora and Howard Willis.

Mora and Bailey had met at University High School in 1963. They shared an obsession with cinema, devouring any available literature on film, and had also experimented with 8 mm filmmaking at artist Mirka Mora's studio in Melbourne.

After graduating in 1966, they enrolled at La Trobe University, which opened that year. Shortly after orientation week they formed a film society with Bishop, Willis and Mathison. Not only did the society show films, its committee decided to make them. Bishop has described the reluctant 16 mm shorts as "interesting avant-garde and undergraduate stuff".

The Film Society also decided to support financially a film journal, the aforementioned *Cinema Papers*. Unfortunately, it was a short-lived publication. Alas that first and only issue, Mora left for London to pursue a career as a painter and filmmaker. He went on to make *Too Late in Monopoly* (1968), *Sweeties* (1971), *Butcher, Can You Spare a Dime?* (1974), *Mad Dog Morgan* (1975), *The Best*

*Within* (1982) and *The Return of Captain Jack* (1983).

In 1969, Bailey left La Trobe to teach English and film studies, while Bishop continued with a degree in Sociology. The next year, Scott Murray arrived at La Trobe and began a *Student of Science* degree in game studies. He joined the film society and wrote film reviews for the campus newspaper, *Asbestos*, which was then co-edited by Bishop.



*Cinema Papers*, No. 1, October 1967

## Box 1

### Editorial, 1967

We are thinking about cinema here in Melbourne, Australia. We are involved in cinema but we are working and thinking on a complex vacuum. . . . There is not one champion of the cinema in Australia who has any courage or intelligence whatsoever — there is not one man here in whom we can put our faith.

### Local Production

Unsurprisingly, amidst Feature Film Commission's Film Unit and the late 1960s pseudo-independent films, local television production occupies the studio mind. Let us hope to inspire hope! it is not sufficient of the state of the Australian consciousness.

### Local Criticism

Unsurprisingly, amongst jargonistic film criticism in *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *University Film Society Publications* is mostly platitudinous or psychobabble (but) but always enthusiastically devoid of sensitivity and insight.

### Cinema in Now

Cinema is now. It is a discipline of the Great Australian Novelity that cinema does not exist here's it not existed here. Cinema is now, that Australia is yesterday. How ridiculous, how absurd, how people to have to screen at Australia. How ridiculous, how absurd, how people to be over in the role of many young men. We would rather be against, whatever it, we would rather hate and decay. On the way and symptoms of creating a few criticism bands.

And so we are brought to this. The screen is the dark baritone. And we know in advance that systems here lead to dead ends.



## The Third Edition 1973-84

Despite *Cinema Papers'* creation in 1970, those who had worked on it kept in contact and participated in several joint filmmaking activities, while continuing studies in filmmaking. The first of these films was the political documentary, *Requiem*, made in 1970 by Bishop Murray, Gordon Glenn (a La Trobe student who had worked as Crawford Productions) and Andrew Proke (also at La Trobe). Then, in 1981, Bishop directed a documentary on autistic children, *Eyes to Eye*, assisted by Bishop, Glenn and Murray. Glenn also starred in Murray's *Pauls* (1977).

In June 1978, Murray returned to Australia to attend the Melbourne Film Festival to exhibit *Swanlike*. He suggested to Bishop that they try to get *Cinema Papers* started again. Bishop was now working as a film editor at the La Trobe University Media Centre (run by Dr Patricia Efron). He was married and approached Murray and Bishop to be fellow editors, but the latter declined.<sup>3</sup>

The major problem was finding the money to get the magazine up and running. The most likely source was the Film and Television Board (FTB) was asked later in the 1980s, one of the seven boards of the then Australian Council for the Arts.

A submission was prepared, which outlined the policy of the magazine as one of documenting the growth of the local film industry and disseminating information so aid this growth (see Box 3). The aim was to cover the production of cinema, from film history to current production reports to industrial film, film education to in-depth interviews with people from all facets of the filmmaking process.

In September, the Film and Television Board approved a grant of \$80,000 for the first issue of what had been intended as a three-issues-per-year publication. The Board instead requested it be quarterly.

When the grant came through, Keith Robinson was approached to do the lay-out. He agreed and went on to design every issue up to No. 42, when he left to work as a freelance

graphic designer and then lecturer in graphic design at the Philip Institute of Technology (before, incidentally, Bishop was also a lecturer in film). Robinson was assisted for several years by Andrew Pezart, who now runs a typesetting and lay-out business.

An office was established in Richmond and the first issue produced. Dated January 1974, it was released in December 1973. The 86-page issue, costing \$1.25, contained interviews with director Ken O. Hall (including a filmography), scriptwriter David Williamson (he had just written an episode of *Lifeline*), actor George Blundell (as *Alvin Purple*), director Gillian Armstrong (on her short film, *100 Days*) and independent distributor, and later producer, Andrew J. Gossaine. Two Australian features were reviewed: *Balmain* and *21A*.

There was a profile of director Peter Weir, by Richard Berriman. This was followed by the first *Cinema Papers* Production Report, which covered the location filming of *The Cars That Ate Paris* in Solihull, NSW. This interview with the Report's writer, Weir, producers Bill and Jan McElroy, director of photography Peter McAleer, and sound recorder Ken Hammond. This initial Report set the tone for those that followed (it was a regular feature up to issue No. 26), in that film technicians were accorded prominence with directors and money men.

Early Australian cinema was re-examined by Ian Bennett's article on Francis Ford (the first issue contained, while section editors were created in a joint on the Victorian Film Laboratories, Barry Hodskins wrote an article on the recent Taffel *State's Report* on the Motion Picture Industry (see Box 4). There was a Production Survey that had to wait to the next issue, where in Production Board eight *Seven* features and eight *Seven* films.



## CINEMA PAPERS



*Cinema Papers* No. 4, January 1974

### Box 4

#### Tariff Board Report

In Ian Bennett's article on the 1973 Taffel Board inquiry into Motion Picture Films, Hodskins was the Board's principal representative.

1. The formation of an Australian Film Authority (AFA) envisaged as the main body charged with the function of fostering and developing the industry producing theatrical films in Australia and
2. The development of 13 districts from the major chains in Australia and the development of exhibition from distribution

The stated recommendations were more short-term. For the AFA and the Australian Film classes, one of three major inquiries. It was intended that the AFA consider four inquiries:

- (i) Project Branch: This was to replace the Australian Film Development Corporation (AFDC).
- (ii) Film Distribution Branch: This would (a) take over distribution from Film Australia, (b) act as an export agency for Australian films, and (c) re-evaluate exhibition outlets for their films with special emphasis on problems.
- (iii) Special Funds Branch: This would be concerned with (a) awards to films without government finance, as well as films of special merit, and (b) the allocation of funds for the Export and Import Film Fund, the Film and Television Development Fund, and Education and archival grants, and (c) industry supervision Branch: This would act as an overseer of commercial exhibitors and distributors' accounts, and would also watch the drive-back of the theatre chain.

As with each *Cinema Papers* that followed, not all the editorial was on Australian cinema. There was an interview with special effects artist Ray Harryhausen, an article (by Morag) on Comics and Film, and reviews of *Le Samouraï*, *Solaris* and *Performance*.

It was always envisaged that *Cinema Papers* balance its editorial coverage between Australian and overseas cinema. The magazine aimed to be a forum for Australian writers to develop critical ideas and, naturally, these interests were not exclusively devoted to Australian cinema.

*Cinema Papers* also sought a coverage of other national cinemas, ranging from the Swedish to the French to the St. Louis. Many have puzzled with Australia's, particularly those in Canada and New Zealand. By means of lengthy captions, which included interviews with top industry figures, the magazine attempted to provide a wide range of information for those within the Australian industry to evaluate the positive aspects and avoid the negative.

Author benefit of a world view is that it respects traditions, neither provided journalists, such writing offered a loosening of standards, not what an industry, still in its infancy, needs. In an interview at the time of *Cinema Papers'* inception, Murray said, "One of the best things we can do for the Australian film industry is to be tough on it."<sup>4</sup> The Australian film industry can only be said to have reached maturity when it films our own stand human experience with the best from the rest of the world.

4 Peter Austin, *Sabbath*, May 1984, p. 85

### Box 3

#### Application to the Film and Television Board

The request of an Australian Cinema being started Australia was very soon to be a positive not only to maintain an economically sound film industry, but also to make primary awareness, critical cinema business to world cinema.

It is the magazine, parallel developments in the past few years of film production, film criticism, and film education that has laid the groundwork for this possibility. It is essential that these three developments do not run diverge, but rather that they continue to converge. What is needed is a forum to stimulate the interchange between filmmakers, critics and educators.

In providing work a forum (*Cinema Papers*) would hope to develop, not only as a medium for interchange, but as an arena for exchange new, creative and innovative. It would aim at developing, not only people working in the development. Application opens, but also the interested public and foreign observers.

# Australian Reaction

The reaction to the first issue, by readers and film critics, was mostly enthusiastic. There was a surprising number of people who felt *Australians* would not be able to produce enough films for the magazine's writers to cover, but also applauded the launch of a new, national film magazine.

Many newspapers carried major items or photographs of the magazine's launch party, but it was not until April 27, 1974, after the publication of a second issue of *Cinema Papers*, that a considered opinion was printed. This was by film critic Colin Bennett in *The Age* (Melbourne).

*Film Guide*, *Film Journal*, *Film Chronicle*, *Cinema Papers* No. 1. Show business! Letters! We've seen them all come and go. Now we have a magazine version of *Cinema Papers* and a really promising publication it is. The cover story is a... doesn't one of its big bolding points to Australian cinema... just when the cinema is reaching its most interesting stage and needs all the encouragement and publicity it can get. The period now includes some very important articles, as well as an amount of super-film fix.

There are pitfalls, I think, which *Cinema Papers* must be careful to avoid. One is the danger of overlooking the question of Australian talent, which can quickly grow boring. Then again, the editors, in their commendable eagerness to promote local production, have devoted large columns of space to both areas to some film people who have got to prove themselves.

Bennett continued to chair *Cinema Papers* program and on January 22, 1977, wrote a follow-up piece. In part it read:

Three years ago when a new *Australians* quarterly appeared, I suggested it might prove to be "a national film magazine worthy of the name to present in Australia's cinema on cinema in the world." And after its launch, *Cinema Papers* at least well on the way. C.P. has become a forum for the interchange of ideas and information between those who make, distribute, exhibit and promote films and those who use them. Besides, no film lover interested in what's going on in his country can afford to miss it now. A good deal of C.P.'s paper focus for its time has been by now, although it is still needed to grab the general reader's Australian product off the shelves and question him as to how much he has in "his" pocket of his eyes on the Australian industry. The magazine has also found a better balance between local interest and writing of the sort covered by overseas publications. There is no much to commend about *Cinema Papers*.

In his first article, Bennett raised the overlooked criticism of *Cinema Papers*—the number, length and format of its interviews. As *Cinema Papers* has never printed an editorial, and thus not commented on magazine policy, it is perhaps appropriate to make some remarks here.

Two of the implications for the present *Cinema Papers* were *Andy Warhol's Interview* and the *Playboy Interviews*. In fact, at one stage it was envisaged the magazine would be entirely interviews; the editors finally decided on about 30 per cent.

In going for a question-and-answer format, the editors chose not to commission answer interviews, whereby the interviewer's questions are done throughout the journalist's prose. An example could be:

Ken Miles lay back on his sofa lounge in his Piedmonte sitting room. Copies of *Playboy* lay scattered on his sofa coffee table. He looked up at his tipped back disinterested visitor. "Yes, it was one hell of a chase," he replied, "though about proving him wrong, but he looked so wrong out I decided I'd just question him about his 'told me' with actors Judy Moore."



As to length, it has always been an editorial decision between readability and the need for depth of coverage. At the same time, there is no reason to assume every interview is read in one sitting, or in its entirety; it can be put down per-ty, as with a book, and continued later, or a reader can skip passages he finds of lesser relevance. It is certainly not guaranteed that every word in every interview is of interest to each reader.

Regarding accuracy, *Cinema Papers* has always had the policy of returning edited transcripts to Australian interviewees for checking. Interviewees may also suggest omissions of sections if they feel the passages are unclear, but there is no obligation on *Cinema Papers* to accept the changes. Obviously not all, since it is in everyone's interest that the interview be printed in its best form. However, if the changes significantly alter the meaning of the original they are not accepted. A published interview is a record of that interview, and the integrity of it should be retained.

A final point is that some people, such as Bennett, have suggested that the interviews are unedited and thus change to suit their article. But the transcription costs alone are more than the national magazine *Cinema Papers* has been able to pay for a finished article, and the costs of editing are also expensive.

In many ways, interviews are the backbone of *Cinema Papers* and are not some cheap stop-

The *Cinema Papers* interview

gap. It is no coincidence that when books on Australian cinema are published it is these interviews which are the most often sourced and quoted.

Another oft-noted criticism of *Cinema Papers* has been that it has concentrated too much on feature film-making. Alisa Thomas in a 1976 article on the Sydney Film-makers Co-operative wrote about "the total neglect of the new alternative Australian cinema by the Baird-founded quarterly *Cinema Papers*." "Alternative" is a word that people use to cover all kinds of filmmaking, from the avant-garde to low-budget features. In terms of highly experimental films, the editors of *Cinema Papers* chose not to attempt to explore the new work of the Cinema in their magazine. However, it was always intended that the magazine cover, and give recognition to, short and low-budget films. And this has happened. By the time of Thomas' article, of the 14 directors interviewed by *Cinema Papers*, four were at the time exclusively directors of short films (Fred Wandlar, David Greig, John Papaioannou, Gillian Armstrong) and none had never before made a feature, most having made

8. Alisa Thomas, "Wages of the Sydney Film-makers Co-operative Film-Two", *Filmweek*, December 1976, pp. 14-22.

superficial shorts (e.g. Peter Weir, Mike Thrall). Only one director had made more than one feature: Ken G. Hall. (The break-up of articles and reviews shows a similar pattern.)

The most recent reference to *Cinema Papers* "reflex" of alternative cinema appeared in Simon Hadzovic's review in *Filmweek* of Nick Herd's *Independent Film-making in Australia (1960-80)* (Hodgkiss books).

Apart from *Alternative and Critical Film-makers* there has not been much sustained coverage of the state of independent film-making in Australia over the last decade.

In the bibliography at the end of his book, Herd lists articles and interviews of particular importance. *Cinema Papers* has easily the most number of entries, some 50 per cent more than *Filmweek*.

*Cinema Papers* has also generated the study of documentary film-making in Australia, so it is hard to know why that production colony the film just doesn't support it.

## Overseas Response

Foreign recognition of *Cinema Papers* came quickly, with journals such as *Film in Britain* printing extracts about its inception and brief reviews of single issues. Then, in late 1973, some major recognition in the international film world. The annual publication is the only one in the world to list and evaluate the leading film periodicals. There is a main section and then "Other Magazines". In the 1976 edition, *Cinema Papers* had its first entry in the latter section.

One of the world's most imaginatively designed mass quarters, in large format, with a host of pictures, typewritten comments, and various reviews and approvals. Colour tinting with impact to the layout.

The next year *Cinema Papers* was up-graded to the main section, making it one of the elite 19. It is the only Australian magazine to have been so listed. In 1983, the main section was reduced to only 13 entries. The one on *Cinema Papers* reads:

Self-declared film magazine in the world, which, despite its focus on film, is actually a magazine of culture, criticism, news, and hard industry knowledge that will be of interest far beyond the boundaries of Australia.

The IFP's view of *Cinema Papers* as one of the world's leading film periodicals is shared by the Federation International des Associations de Film (FIAPF), which includes the top international film journals. *Cinema Papers* is the only Australian film magazine to be fully reviewed.

International awareness of *Cinema Papers* is as important as recognition in Australia, for the magazine is the primary source of information about Australian film for world film buyers, critics and historians. This role was emphasised from the start as being of paramount importance, and it is one reason why the editors consider the magazine should not be purchased or self-applied. A magazine that is obviously too small in its scope, or too laudatory in its attitude, would quickly lose credibility. That would help neither the magazine nor the industry.

Naturally, some film producers took a dim view of what they saw as a too critical approach to Australian film, particularly in the Film Review. One producer even complained to the

APC that a review of her film had cost her an American sale.

Another way the publishers of *Cinema Papers* decided to help with this dissemination of information to overseas readers was to produce a special one-off issue for the Cannes Film Festival. The bumper issue contained selected copy of all the Australian films being shown at Cannes in the official events and the marketplace. But due to the producers' grumbling mentioned above, the issues contained no reviews. This was the only time national was affected by outside pressure; the APC was a time no marketing firm would be forthcoming if reviews were included. As it was felt that the Cannes issue's principal role was the promoting of the Australian films and not the marketing (though an absence of reviews did depress serious critics), the APC's condition was accepted by the publishers.

## Consolidation

It was originally intended that the members of the editorial board (Bailly, Maca and Murray) would alternate in the position of managing editor. However, Maca had returned to the APC in 1975 and his agent was reluctant to that of a few articles. Bailly and Murray then decided to alternate with one-year editorships in an attempt to combine film production and publishing. One consequence a liability now hangs between the two. Bailly was production supervisor on *Mad Dog Morgan* during the early 1970s while Murray wrote and directed *Samuel* (1974) and, later, the short feature, *Summer Shadows* (1977). However, the alternating theory did not work in practice (it was difficult to synchronise) and, as a result, Murray has edited 35 (and co-edited one) of the first 44 issues.

While the managing editor, with input from the contributing editors, largely control the editorial, it is the writers who should take credit for its quality. Film criticism, research and journalism were in their infancy during the 1960s, though journals such as *Amsterdam* on film and the *British Cinema Journal* did give lively and informed pieces. But there was little sense of direction, in part because there was no feature industry on which to focus.

Many critics in the early 1970s wrote for *Lancet* and the early editors of *Cinema Papers* and *Isis* knew such as Andrew Phibbs and Ross Cropper were beginning to publish the early stages of their excellent careers. With *Cinema Papers*'s commencement in 1973, and the demise of magazines such as *Lancet*, most of these writers were soon being published in the one source. This enabled *Cinema Papers* to become the forum it had intended to be, one which willingly published disparate views. It is then extraordinary to find how often one, as it were, it seemed to him, might write an intended upon everything published in the magazine. One is frequently stopped in one's tracks with the remark, "But how can you say you like that film? Four reviews told it to you."

Not only is there independence of thought, there are individual styles and methods. Ken Kynard's rigorous analysis of the films of Bruce De Silvera contrast with the witty reviews of

'star' biographies by Brian McFarlane, just as interviews with Peter Weir and Michael Threlkirk contrast in style and content with those with Paul Winkler and Andrew J. Proctor.

It is not the place here to evaluate the skills of the many contributors to *Cinema Papers*; their work stands for itself. However, a look through the past 43 issues indicates the growing depth and quality of film writing in Australia (see Box 5). *Cinema Papers* by no means has a monopoly on fine writing, as its magazine or associated 15,000. That includes subscriptions to more than 50 countries, making the magazine more widely distributed than, say, *Script* (estimated which sells 9000 copies) in fact, *Cinema Papers* is now one of the world's five or six top-selling critical film journals, on a par with *Movie* in the US.

## Box 5

### Cinema Papers Initiatives

The Interview	(Ken G. Hall, No. 1, 1974)
Production Report	(The Cinematist, No. 1, 1974)
Filmography	(Raymond Langford, No. 3, 1974)
In Production	(No. 3, 1974)
Festival Reviews	(Cinema, No. 3, 1974)
Picture Reviews	(Cinema, No. 3, 1974)
Review Section	(No. 4, 1974)
Book Reviews	(No. 4, 1974)
Index	(No. 4, 1974)
Columns	(No. 4, 1974)
The Overseas	(No. 4, 1974)
Feature Checklist	(No. 4, 1974)
Searchable	(No. 4, 1974)
Guide to the	(No. 4, 1974)
Australian Film	(No. 4, 1974)
Production	(No. 4, 1974)
Film Company	(No. 4, 1974)
Design	(No. 4, 1974)
International	(No. 4, 1974)
Production Review	(No. 4, 1974)
New Film Group	(No. 4, 1974)
Financial Review	(No. 4, 1974)
and Faculty Guide	(No. 4, 1974)
Forum	(No. 4, 1974)
Selected Report	(No. 4, 1974)
Television Section	(No. 4, 1974)
Film Study Resources	(No. 4, 1974)
Guide	(No. 4, 1974)
Other Cinema	(No. 4, 1974)
Cinema Supplement	(No. 4, 1974)
Television Supplement	(No. 4, 1974)
Director's Biography	(No. 4, 1974)
New Zealand	(No. 4, 1974)
Supplement	(No. 4, 1974)
New Zealand Section	(No. 4, 1974)
Television Section	(No. 4, 1974)
Cinema Supplement	(No. 4, 1974)
New Products and	(No. 4, 1974)
Design	(No. 4, 1974)
Color Power	(No. 4, 1974)
Color Page	(No. 4, 1974)
Cinema Magazine	(No. 4, 1974)

4. *Filmweek* (October 1973, p. 42)  
5. *Filmweek* (October 1973, p. 42)  
6. *Filmweek* (October 1973, p. 42)  
7. *Filmweek* (October 1973, p. 42)

## Changes

In 1978, Robert Le Tett joined Cinema Papers Pty Ltd as a financial adviser (he also became a director in 1980<sup>11</sup>). Le Tett, who had worked at Cinefance Productions and AAFV, was at the time a freelance consultant before becoming managing director of The Film House Pty Ltd, and, among other positions, a consultant to and then director and deputy chairman of the Melbourne radio station, HOFM-FM. Le Tett's contribution to Cinema Papers was particularly significant in two areas: change of frequency and diversification.

In 1979, the magazine changed from a (broad) 96-page quarterly to an 80-page bi-monthly. The aim was to streamline overheads against an income instead of loss, and thus improve the company's balance sheet and cash flow. The change to bi-monthly also enabled the magazine to carry more news-type information and be more up-to-date.

Gone bi-monthly proved a success and was appreciated by readers. Instead of sales falling, as feared, they increased. And although advertising revenue per issue dropped, the annual total increased. So in two ways the change of frequency strengthened the magazine.

The rationale for diversification was that the projected normal decline had stopped reducing and was beginning to reverse. As the Australian Film Commission, which had absorbed the Film, Radio and Television Board, indicated it could not increase its annual funding level, this meant extra funds had to be found elsewhere. The decision was to move into film-related publishing ventures which would hopefully create a profit.

The diversification, overseen by Betty while Murray ran the magazine, commenced in a subtle way with the *Australian Motion Picture Yearbook*, first published in 1980 in association with the New South Wales Film Corporation. Its appearance was welcomed by the industry which had not had access to the range of information listed in its pages, and the book sold sufficient copies (2400) to nearly break even.

Subsequent editions appeared in 1981 (also in association with the NSWFC) and in 1982 (under the Four Seasons imprint). By then sales had increased to 4000 including several hundred overseas. Each edition was edited by Betty, the third in partnership with Ross Lancel.

Other early ventures included *Film Producer as the Star of Australia* (1979), in association with the Film Victoria Film Corporation, edited by Murray. *Film Expo 80* (1980), published for the Film and Television Production Associations of Australia and the NSWFC and *The Australian Film Producers and Directors Guide* (1978), edited by Betty. This was a subscription service based on the highly-regarded "Guide to the Australian Film Production", published as *Picture Australia* by Cinema Papers. Unfortunately, the *Australian Guide* never fully got off the ground, and folded.

A much more successful project was *The New Australian Cinema* (1980), edited by Murray. That was the first book to assemble (essentially) Australian features and shorts since 1970. Published by The new Australian Cinema, in association with Cinema Papers, it quickly sold its print run and was reprinted in 1980.



Above: the diversification publishing. Opposite page: articles from Cinema Papers.

Also published in association with Thomas Nelson was *Australian TV: the first 25 years*, edited by Betty. It continued the growing coverage and interest in Australasia between books in Cinema Papers (No. 13).

Then, in 1981, Cinema Papers published *The Documentary Film in Australia* (in association with Film Victoria), edited by Lancel and Betty. It was a pioneering work. But it was costly to produce, and ended up draining the magazine's resources instead of supplementing them. This in itself threatened the continuance of the publishing program. Even with an enviable track record, the effects of even a "failed" project was becoming a risk Cinema Papers could barely afford to take.

This concern, plus an absence of risk capital, led to a scaling down of the diversification program. Betty left Cinema Papers at the end of 1981 to head a new publishing venture, Envoque Publishers, set up to publish the *Australian Picture Yearbook* and several other yearbooks in a joint venture with Thomas Nelson. This meant that the only projects which could be initiated were those that could be

financed by the magazine editor on day-to-day moments. Thus in 1982-83 only one project was started, Bruce McFarlane's *Words and Images* (1983), published by Hutchinson Publishers in association with Cinema Papers. In this book, McFarlane examines 30 Australian novels and the films made of them since 1970.

In all, the diversification program was a success, with most of the projects being a profit. More important, they collectively represent a significant contribution to film and literary culture in Australia.

## Interrelations

Cinema Papers had been published virtually only from September 1973 to July 1983 when the publication was stopped, due to financial insolvency. The reasons for this are complex, in part due to shifts in the relationship between Cinema Papers Pty Ltd and the AFC.

At its inception, the AFC absorbed the Film, Radio and Television Board. It was not a huge merger, many senior executives in the AFC's managing board to take on the likes of the Supermarket Film Fund, a win item in leveraging their off-budget as merchant bankers to the film industry. They were less interested in film culture (despite the wording of the AFC's governing Act), and more concerned what they saw as Cinema Papers' slowness from the film industry. While the Film and Television Board valued an independence, critical journal, some within the AFC felt the magazine should be more a servant to its shareholders and members.

11. The *Chronicle of Cinema Papers Pty Ltd* have been: Peter Bailey (1973-80), John Murray (1978-80), Philip Mero (1978-80), Robert Le Tett (1980-82) and Erik Lohmann (1982-83). To avoid confusion with the magazine, the company's name is not included in the list.

12. Betty left Envoque in mid 1981 to head *The Film Picture Television Pty Ltd*. There, he produced *Australian Movies in the World* (Victoria and New South Wales) and *Once in Asia* (Cinema Papers 1984). He is also producer of *Asia* (Cinema Papers 1984) and *On the Beach* (Cinema Papers 1984) and *On the Beach* (Cinema Papers 1984).





And, whereas the Film, Radio and Television Board had instructed that Cinema Papers be set up as a privately-owned company, the AFC was now arguing that the magazine should be controlled by an industry membership (as with the Australian Film Institute).

The issue that brought everything to a head was money. Since 1977, Cinema Papers has been ailing financially by deficit funding from the AFC. Cinema Papers would profit the annual financial-year deficit and then apply to the AFC for that amount. In 1973, the grant represented 100 per cent of the operating budget; by 1981-1982, it had dropped to only 10 per cent, quite a gain on the road to self-sufficiency.

At the same time, the AFC began granting less than the requested amounts. In the three financial years from July 1980 to June 1983, Cinema Papers' requests were cut back by \$42,000 (or 32 per cent).

These cut-backs were crippling and difficult to understand. Perhaps the annual grants were tied to earlier Film and Television Board levels (\$8000 per issue in 1976; \$8103 in 1981-82), perhaps the cut-backs represented an AFC response of the size of the proposed deficit, fuelled by having to deal daily with production companies for refusing their claims.

Of course, there were many other factors that contributed to Cinema Papers' financial plight, and had Cinema Papers been granted its requests in full it still would have been in the red. And if the AFC is guilty of unnecessary cut-backs, Cinema Papers is guilty of having requested too little. Knowing the AFC would

make annual grants of only \$40,000 to \$50,000 Cinema Papers tried to produce the magazine for that, aware that substantially higher funds were required.

As well, there were the vagaries of the distribution program. This was worsened when a total absence of capital grants only one special project could be initiated in 1982-83.

Another contributing factor to the unhealthy position at the end of 1982-83 was the poor state of the film industry. Unsettled by changes in the legislation and generally hampered by the recent economic recovery, the industry was through a lean phase. This had a major and detrimental effect on advertising sales.

The net result of all the above factors, and several others, was that Cinema Papers was faced at the end of 1982-83 with a large deficit. Given changes in the Companies Act, it became illegal to trade (break-even) and had a deficit and did not have a reasonable belief could be met. The most the accumulated loss had to be liquidated and the subsidy for the next financial year granted or Cinema Papers would have to cease its operations.

In June 1983 Cinema Papers applied to the AFC, firstly setting out its financial position. One hope was to convince the AFC about the extent to which Cinema Papers' loss had been underfunded over the years. The application then proposed a scheme whereby the AFC and the various state film bodies would together meet the deficit and adequately fund the magazine in 1983-84.

While the application proposed a general course of action, it did not request specific

amounts of money from specific corporations. It was, hopefully, a basis for discussion. But the AFC, alarmed by the size of the deficit and disappointed it had not been informed of the situation earlier, rejected the application outright. One week later members learnt news from the AFC suggesting that when Cinema Papers was going into liquidation and what would happen to the masthead and copyright.

Given the AFC's rejection, Cinema Papers had no alternative but to make publication voluntarily and on July 22 all staff were laid off. On the basis of legal advice, Cinema Papers then sought a 120-day moratorium from its creditors while a attempt to solve its financial plight. This proved a lengthy and exhausting process.

Applications to Film Victoria and the South Australian Film Corporation were rejected. No reply has been received from the Queensland Film Corporation to the July 15 application (though really do move slowly up North). The only options were to raise funds privately (these efforts were forthcoming) or change the AFC's mind.

Finally, after months of negotiations, and receiving the advice and help of a Cinema Papers Agents Committee<sup>15</sup>, an agreement was reached between Cinema Papers and the AFC and Film Victoria. It is worth mentioning here because it will have a major effect on the magazine in time to come.

15. The committee comprised: Brian from Cinema Papers Australia and staff; Alan Parnes; Geoff Gardner; Heather Miller; L.S. Buhk; Tony Evans and John Stone.



# Photo Gallery

A selection of photographs commissioned for *Cinema Papers*



Paul Giamatti, director Hannu Behar, 1999



Fusch Hawken, actress Helen Morse, 1982



Gordon Giamatti, producer Philip Adams, 1996



Philip Martin, animator Bruce Felly, 1973



Ruth Wedmore, producer Geoff Burrows and director George Miller, 1982



Peter William, director Tony Austin, 1982



Gordon Davis, director Gillian Armstrong, 1973



Peter Thompson, director Tim Burstall, 1979



Gordon Davis, director John Power, 1977



Patricia Keates, Melinae Givens and John Gentry, 1976



John Wood, director "The Untouchables" 1960



John Guarnieri, director "The Graduate" and "Magnum" 1967



Phil Dunham, director "The Untouchables" 1960



Peter Hall, director "The Untouchables" 1960



William E. Bly, director "The Untouchables" 1960



Louis Baskin, director "The Untouchables" 1960



Nelson Goff, director-producer "The Untouchables" 1960



Josh Schwartz and James Van Der Beek 1997



Josh Schwartz: Terry Anderson (happy) 1997



Peter Hensler: Michael Anthony T. Gorman 1998



Peter Hensler: producer Michael John Gorman 1998



Gordon Glen: producer Pat Lovell 1999



Peter Malvern, singer Margaret Kelly and producer Josh Long 1999



Peter Malvern: Margaret Kelly 1999



Sue Abar, producer Pat Fitch, 1975



Bruce O'Donnell, editor New Leaflet, 1976



French Henshaw, producer Robert Mazon, 1979



Judith Henshaw, distributor/producer Spike in Cloak, 1975



Peter Mousen, composer Two Blue, 1980



Bertie Black, assistant of cinematography French Boy, 1979



Sue Abar, Michael Feinberg and Christopher Price, 1977

# THE INDUSTRY ON THE COMMENTS on the past ten years and the future

## Government Support for the Film Industry

Phillip Adams

Chairman, Australasian Film Commission

### Funds, Fiddles and Follies

Some months ago the Australasian Film Commission (AFC) announced the appointment of Kim Williams as chief executive director. At the time I expressed delight that someone of Kim's calibre had been foolish enough to accept this important position. Kim may have been amazed when he heard this but I wonder if he will be laughing in six months time. By then he will have been bedevilled by a hundred ill-appealed applicants, bludgeoned from his position (possibly and possibly by belligerent cinematists, poets, writers and musicians).

The AFC spends much of its time saying yes to people, leaving the state word also in the glowing corridors of Canberra and, occasionally, when everything comes together and there is a film on the screen, standing in the back row and applauding the result. But there will be few stars to lead us down the aisle. At the end of his term he will join Joe Skerzyski in exile in Tuscany and begin work on his melancholy memoirs.

Government support for the arts is really a euphemism for fiddling and fending. It is something people in suits do to people in T-shirts. What's more, it is something you do largely by the seat of your pants when there are lots of rules but no formulae. You have to use your wits and tread between the lines on the piece of paper and flout in front of you. You can't cough a conqueror or a crystal ball.

This being the case, how do you judge the value of government support, the fiddle of the fiddlers and fenders? Certainly not by their rhetoric or dream state. Perhaps the answer is to apply the Hollywood rule: that you are only as good as your last picture, or, in this case, funding decision.

But that is a pretty tough yardstick. Most filmmakers want to talk about their next picture, not the one they finished, and so singers prefer to stroll only the one that got

away. It is a license fiddle and funding bodies are not exempt.

The truth is that persons, whether private benefactors or bodies corporate, are divided when the dust has settled by the triumphs and failures of their support. They are like the scaffolding on buildings: instantly and completely structures dismantled and forgotten when the building has finally taken shape.

However, for those who stand you are only as good as the last thing you did, the evidence is in your hands: the most recent decision of the AFC was to lend its support to this 80th Anniversary Issue, which I am committed to you.

## Government Film Funding (State)

Paul Riomfai

Chairman, New South Wales Film Corporation

### The Holy Grail

If there has been a single strand running through most Australian attitudes to film-making in the past decade, it is that the search for a magic formula for The Great Australian Movie. We have sought magical things by Gough: alchemy is the art of the word have been artistic achievement, cultural importance and entertainment. The GMM would be something which audiences would both admire and make profitable.

The magic formula has been our holy grail, something which, we have told ourselves, can be found with just a bit more time, effort and knowledge. Indeed, every six months or so, one or more opinion leaders in the film industry have jumped up and announced that they have found it — well, maybe. Like a medieval alchemist crying "Eureka!", we have delivered our pronouncements. They have been as varied and contradictory as the following:

We must aim modestly at successful art-house distribution. We must make films for the popular, mainstream market. Our models should be the best of European cinema. No, we have more to learn from American films. We must spend much more money on production. We must keep our budgets very low. People are

not in rediscovering their past through period films. This might have been true but the market has become saturated with "nostalgia", we must use contemporary themes. Overseas stars are essential to international sales. Overseas actors are a waste of money (hardly being culturally aware). The subject-matter of our films should be more international. The most interesting subjects are those based on our national experience and culture. Profit lies in American cinema distribution. No, the cinema is dying, our best commercial hope lies in the new ancillary markets. Both propositions are wrong because they imply one of motion pictures, we should be making more series for television instead. And so on.

Of late, a formula has been heralded almost because of very recent experience. Thus, the success of films such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Cadillac* led to a rush to buy the rights to a lot of old Australian novels. *The Man from Snowy River* was taken as a validation of big budgets and high promotional expenditure. In contrast, Paul Cox has probably single-handedly been responsible for the current advocacy of low-budget films.

A formula can only in desperation as a reply to failure or to success. This explains the brightness against period films after the disappointing response to *The Inbetweeners*, *The Mango Tree* and the like. I will remember the lesson expressed by a number of people when the New South Wales Film Corporation decided to release lavishly in *My Brilliant Career* in 1975. "No whether period film?" was the said. "You're making a mistake. The public is sick of nostalgia." In three weeks, they ignored the fact that "period" does not necessarily equal "nostalgia" and that a film set at the time of the century could have contemporary relevance. Eventually, we, too, were driven to react — all the way to the bank.

This points to the problem with most of the formulae which have been advanced for the salvation of the Australian film industry: they have generally suffered from the logical fallacy of arguing from the particular to the general. This is not to say that they have given equally elements of truth. Thus, it is interesting to observe that the most profitable Australian films have not depended for their success, either in Australia or elsewhere, on the better-off attraction of overseas stars (beyond one of those films — *The Man from Snowy River* and *Breaker Morant* — had foreign performers



in key roles, they were chosen for performance, not for any so-called "emergence" power! Similarly, the best projects for many Australian films in North America might lie in the ancillary markets. But this has not prevented *Mad Max 2* and *The Man from Snowy River* from breaking into the mainstream American theatrical market. Nor did a stop *My Brilliant Career* and *Breaker Morant*, for example, from doing good business on the American art-house circuit.

My belief is that, as it did for knights in white chargers in the Middle Ages, the search for a holy grail by Australian filmmakers has proved, and will continue to prove, fruitless. There is no magic formula. What matters are talent and good ideas, and these are unsurprisingly and unpredictably — in other words, incapable of induction to some kind of formula. In some film, I am mindful of something which the chairman and chief executive of Universal Pictures, Lou Wasserman, the doves of Hollywood filmmakers, once said: if he could be certain of a film's earning potential before its release, he would not be sitting in his office earning a salary but would set up a one-man consultancy business. Even when he turns in his present job would sell into magnificent obscurity when he would make if he could be so clairvoyant.

This is not a matter for despair; it is simply a reality. For, without the aid of formulas, Australian filmmakers — producers, directors, technicians, actors and actresses — have achieved a lot in the past 10 years. In movies like *Breaker*, they have made some highly successful films and have won four Oscars. Perhaps more important, they have achieved two unsurpassable results: they have helped lift Australia's consciousness of their own place and culture, and they have created a greater overseas awareness of our country. Even if we have not made the greatest film ever for even *The Great Australian Movie*, these are large achievements.

It remains true, however, that many more films had thus succeed commercially. This is so throughout the film world, not just in Australia. Nevertheless, at this stage of its development — and it is the foreseeable future — the Australian film industry cannot be economically viable, independent of governmental assistance. Government film funding bodies remain an important source of production finance, although the federal tax incentives have boosted private investment (and tax incentives are not a form of official assistance anyhow). And they continue to provide most of the funds for script and project development. That is why the state and federal film funding bodies need the continued support of their respective governments.

There is another reason for the continued existence of a variety of government funding bodies and this takes me back to my starting point. Holy grails have a habit of being as perpetually elusive as they are perennially elusive. All of us in the film industry are guilty, at one time or another, of thinking we have hit upon a good formula for filmmaking. This means that, if there were only one source of funds for development and production, the film industry would tend to hunch from one attempt at achieving a magic formula to another. As long as there are varied sources of funding — state, federal and private — there can be different objectives and different visions. That way we can keep on making very valuable films in the art-house market. But if it were only one source of government investment. So be it. A single source, towards artists, would not go astray in our industry. The end result of our labor can, of

course, be very important, both in terms of the cultural and entertainment objectives and the financial responsibility we have. But, in addition, I do not think we have to take ourselves nearly as seriously as we do often do. As I said before, what we need are talent and good ideas, not self-importance.

## Actors and Announcers Equity

### Janette Paramount

NZCA General Secretary Actors and Announcers Equity

The advertisements of the Australian film industry during the past 10 years have been positive and swift. In a few years, the industry has won recognition at home and abroad.

In spite of this, the "backers" continue to forecast in doom and heap negative criticism on an achievement.

Even having no feature film industry at all, Australian films have moved from the Addressors of Barry McKewen in *My Brilliant Career* with breathtaking speed. This is no more for what one considers that film is a high-risk business with each product taking years to complete.

Australian films have achieved an important place in local distribution and exhibition, and won audiences across the world; the role of box-office success for Australian films in Australia is far better than that of imported product. Australian actors have received international awards, and Australian actors, writers and directors are frequently wooed by the major studios.

It must be recognized that without the support and intervention of Australian governments, both at the state and federal levels, such achievements could not have been reached.

The requirements that television commercials be produced locally, the Australian content regulations for television, the subsidization of theatre, the establishment of the National Institute for Dramatic Art and the Australian Film and Television School provided the skilled crew, writers and actors necessary for the film industry to develop. The role of the various government film bodies is obvious in script development, investment, loans and marketing assistance. The introduction of the tax incentives for film was simply a progression to government support for Australian film.

When the package of government support is looked at in toto, whatever failures each individual part is that package may have, it is a considerable achievement in the overall development of Australian film.

It is to the credit of the creative people working in the industry that not only have they the skill to produce, direct, write, film and act in films of worth, but that they have also had the initiative and determination to seize on opportunities, risk our hard-earned and lobby governments to build an industry where one had ceased to exist.

However, the industry is still young. It requires further fostering and continued commitment to reach its full potential.

One of the greatest dangers to the continued stability of Australian film is the reluctance to foster new talent. In the current climate of industry working just as hard as ever, it may have held the same position as previous times, and with some governmental bodies looking in the same direction, there is a danger

that the industry will simply churn out "more of the same", and lose much of its vitality. Certainly neither *My Brilliant Career* nor *Mad Max* would have been made with such restrictions, and yet both are landmarks in Australian cinema.

During the next 10 years it would like to see Australian film provide more roles for actresses. Apart from the greater period pieces, Australian cinema has offered few good parts for women. It is important that writers and producers take stock of the culture they are creating and its worth if Australian film continues to portray women in antiquated roles or not even represent them at all. From the end of 1979 to mid-1982, only 13 per cent of roles which received billing in Australian films were roles for women. Furthermore, if one looks at the nature of the roles during that period, many of them received very little screen time and the majority were passive.

I also believe it is essential that co-going professional workshops be established involving professional directors, writers and actors. It is essential, if Australian films are to improve in quality, that professional actors have access to workshops with good teachers, as actors in other parts of the world do. It is also essential that writers and directors gain experience as performers just as they are doing with that craft in producing their own. Currently there is no forum where this occurs.

New film additional time is available to complete a film under the tax concessions, it is hoped that more time will be given to pre-production. Pre-production, particularly for non-commercial films, is the most important in the Australian industry. Rarely is the actor given pre-production time for research, character development, script work or rehearsal with the director. Time invested in these areas would enhance the quality of the finished product and assist the shoot.

It is also important that government extend its involvement, which has provided the basis for a viable production industry, into distribution and exhibition. The product is there and has proven its worth. The market place into which that product must go is structured in such a way as to disadvantage one-off suppliers such as Australian producers. The market place needs to be opened up, only government can do that, and there is a definite appetite for the production of film if it is disadvantaged at the selling point.

Whatever the future holds for Australian cinema, as long as it continues to be controlled by Australians and promotes an Australian cultural identity, its achievement will continue.

## Children's Television

### Patricia Edgar

Chairman, Australian Children's Television Foundation

Ten years ago the Children's Television Advisory Committee (CTAC), in a report to the Australian Broadcasting Commission, recommended the low standards of children's programs produced by the television industry. The program, the CTAC said, failed to meet the spirit of the Production Guidelines for Children's Television Programs published in June 1971. The programs were uninformative, low budget, confined to close programming with and children turned away from them in droves.

In 1981, two years after the introduction of new guidelines for children's programs by the

Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT), the Children's Program Committee (CPC), the ABT's advisory committee, made the same kind of critical comments that had been made almost a decade earlier. The CPC criticized stations for "leaving the better rather than the worst of the children's programs at the mercy of the viewers, the high level of repetition, the dearth of any Australian children's drama and the lack of industry by means. So what has been achieved in 18 years and what can we look forward to in the future?"

The first breakthrough for the decade came with the public inquiry into self-regulation for broadcasters in 1977. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT) was established to oversee the performance of stations in the area of children's television and recommended both the establishment of a system of "C" classification for programs specifically designed for children aged between 6 and 13 years, and the formation of a Children's Program Committee to oversee the development of the concept. Only "C" classified programs could be broadcast between 4 and 7 p.m. Monday to Friday. The Government accepted these recommendations and the CPC was formed in November 1978 with the requirements for "C" classified programs being introduced from July 1979.

The CPC began with high hopes. Noted was that a new dawn in children's television was envisaged in which programs would have the same resources, human and financial, as their adult counterparts. The streets fell in short of this expectation.

The regulation of children's television is a new field. Only in Australia has the body responsible for monitoring the commercial television industry taken on the task of regulation, each step has been experimental.

The CPC soon recognized that the system needed testing if regulations were to be successful. Two years after its inception, the CPC concluded there had been limited success and significant failures resulting from its work. A number of high-quality, overseas programs had been shown, but the majority would not have been shown without the ABT's requirements. In addition, there were Australian-made programs on air which would not have been produced. The problems of children's television continued to be publicized, largely because of the CPC's existence.

However, the high level of repeated programs, the lack of diversity, the pushing of programs beyond the young age level to attract older audiences, and the lack of high-quality productions remained as problems. For the next three years the ABT ignored the CPC's requests to tighten the regulatory system. The stations flouted the guidelines and the ABT took no action until October 1982 when it issued the CPC's revised program standards for public comment. These standards are well drafted and tighten the loopholes that had been evident. Requests have been limited. The standards require 50 per cent of first-class Australian material to be played between 4 and 7 p.m. They require a diversity of program types and no multi-hour, high-quality children's drama series from each network to be broadcast each year beginning July 1984. The ABT is expected to have promulgated the standards by late February 1984. It has taken five years of work by the CPC to create this regulatory framework and the achievement is significant. However, to make programs which will attract children involves far more than standards; it takes creative talent, ideas, production expertise and money.

The second major breakthrough in the past decade in the area of children's television was the establishment of the Australian Children's

Television Foundation (ACTF). After a number of government inquiries, a Senate Standing Committee report and the hard work of a number of groups and individuals, the Australian Education Council decided to establish a Working Group to look at the feasibility of establishing such a Foundation. This investigation led to the ACTF's incorporation in March 1982.

The ACTF's major function is to act as a catalyst bringing to children's television the film and television industries' best resources. This is done by encouraging the development, production and transmission of programs through script development, production financing, providing production resources, financial assistance and other appropriate forms of assistance to program makers. The Foundation also works to raise the profile of children's television in the community by running workshops and seminars, providing speakers, writing series proposals, and publishing papers and books under its relevant topics.

The past 16 years have brought significant changes in the area of children's television in Australia, but the main reason any one is seen on the television screen. A regulatory system can provide only the framework; a foundation can take risks independent producers and stations would not take to develop new and exciting programs in the end, the vision must come from children's television in its own right.

The position the ACTF takes is of fundamental importance in this process. Standards must be enforced. No station executive enjoys the process of public accountability that the license renewal system could provide. The machinery is all in place to make stations accountable. The ABT can wield the stick but it cannot be a carrot. Alongside the work of the ABT and the work that the ACTF is doing to stimulate the creative development of programs, there needs to be an environment in the atmosphere surrounding children's programs so that quality becomes a matter of broadcaster prestige.

This is a difficult to achieve in Australia because of the cross-ownership of media. There is virtually no independent criticism of children's television, or television in general, in the only press or in magazines in Australia. Most media discussion of television is aimed at the promotion of programs which does little to spark a competition to excel. Few journalists understand the complexities of production solutions for children or the potential of children's television. Through letters, articles, publicity campaigns and awards, programing interventions can be recognized.

Although the groundwork has been laid in the past 10 years for an Australian children's television industry, the next 10 years will act as a going concern. Unless the community gains behind the organizations that are now in place, children will continue to miss out.

## Distribution and Exhibition

### Alan Finney

National Director, Marketing and Distribution, Australian Film Commission

### Meeting Great Expectations

In the years leading up to the early 1970s, it seemed as though there were films from the U.S., France, Italy and Britain, but there were Australian films. That Australian

films were shown at all was due to the sense of obligation felt by the distributors and exhibitors, and the pressure applied by the film community. A lot of heat and anxiety was generated by people who were discontented, without really knowing why, that Australia have a film industry.

By the late 1970s, the sense of urgency had waned, the stage where expectations about what the Australian film industry could produce had been raised too high. Films began falling far short of expectations and the public began to grow even more Australian film with the attitude, "There is another Australian film being funded on it." In part, the public was reacting to the fact that even Australian film was being described as the best Australian film ever — as the saying of the producers.

Today, the energy and urgency have disappeared somewhat and the people handling Australian films have more confidence in them, and in themselves. They realize that distributing an Australian film is usually similar to handling a film from any other country, but a much less likely to be considered on an individual basis and on its merits.

The public's expectation of Australian films has also become more realistic, taking the attitude that locally made films will be the same as films from other countries — some will be good and some will be bad — without the old saying "Australian films have had to carry in the past that they are the best ever."

The pressure on distributors and exhibitors from producers has also lessened as the latter become more visible and more attuned to the marketplace. In the early 1970s, producers used to be concerned that the distributor was not spending enough money on the launch of a film. Today, producers still encourage producers where film questions are "What is your advertising budget?" If it is not \$150,000, they become fixated on the outdated assumption that there is a direct causal relationship between the advertising dollar and the box-office. That is, the more you spend the more you are going to make.

Producers are now realizing that it is not wise to seek distribution with a distributor who does not share their commercial expectations of the film and, second, that the distributor's judgment about the financial possibility may be accurate in that there is no sense spending money putting a film in the marketplace only to lose it, it may be better to save until far sales success, television or overseas sales. There are many films released in the U.S. and other territories that are never seen outside the borders of their country of origin and, alternatively, films that are never seen in their country of origin.

Obviously, not all the judgments of a distributor are correct but it is also difficult to give a professional judgment about a film which distracts you from the film's appeal. What one is saying, in effect, is "After all the trouble you have gone to and money you have spent, no one is going to see it." Of course, there are options in this situation and one of these is to screen the film in "one city tour" instead of spending money on a national release, or hire a test launch in Melbourne or Sydney to get some idea of the film's appeal to the public and to make marketing decisions.

Not every Australian film has or should have a market launch like those for *Man from Snowy River* or *Peter Lap* — for example, *Cerita*, *He Might Have You* and *Man of Flowers*. Jane Bingham (co-producer, *Man of Flowers*) and Paul Cox (producer and director) were not with press relief and delegates at Melbourne when they said "We're concerned you don't spend too much."

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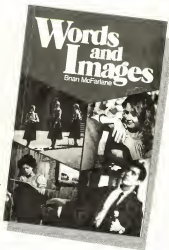
*Words and Images* is the first Australian book to examine the relationship between literature and film. Taking three major examples of recent films adapted from Australian novels — including *The Getting of Wisdom*, *My Brilliant Career* and *The Year of Living Dangerously* — it looks at some of the issues in transposing a narrative from one medium to the other. This lively book provides valuable and entertaining insight for all those interested in Australian films and novels.

The author, Brian McFarlane, is Principal Lecturer in Literature at the Chisholm Institute of Technology and is a Contributing Editor to *Cinema Papers*, Australia's leading film journal. He has published many articles on Australian and other literature and film. He is also the author of a book on Martin Boyd's "Langston" novels, is the editor of the annual collection of literary essays, *Perspectives*, and is the co-editor of a forthcoming anthology of Australian verse.

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The question of whether marketing methods have become more sophisticated or more targeted towards a specific audience, or whether the market has changed, is difficult to answer. Marketing methods are neither sophisticated nor do they change very much; we really need to do the same things again and again. Some marketing tools and approaches are more appropriate for a particular film, probably the key question is "Which of the other strategies tried and established art of procedure do we apply to this film?" Why people go into a cinema to see a particular film, apart from the mass audience phenomena such as E.T. and *Return of the Jedi*, is an unknown. No one knows why before the event. Everyone knows why after the event.

One of the most persistent surprises of the past 10 years was *Breaker Morant*. Long and detailed meetings were held between Kodak and an embattled Matt Currell [producer] about a film no one could have predicted would become so successful. It was essentially a courtroom drama, admirably structured so the action appeared and reappeared throughout, about the last entirely subjective picture, and not with what the industry calls an "upcoming." It did not look at though it had "break-out" potential. However, the film was not just successful, it was incredibly so.

Most Australian films being made on the budget levels operating at that time can't expect to recoup money within Australia. Until Australia films make a significant impact into other major markets, they are hardly likely to stay significant revenue.

The video market is obviously another area where Australian producers can look for a return, particularly if the film was not commercially successful in the theaters. However, the video market has only taken off in a major way in 1982, and I believe it is too early to judge what its effect on cinema attendance will be and what return it will provide for Australian producers.

In the past few years there have become more numerous Film Australia's *The House of China*, produced by Susanne Baker, screened on TEN-10 in 1980. In 1981, ATN-7 won *Stepping Out* after its director, Chris Noonan, negotiated a special deal with sponsors to avoid breaking the film for commercials. In 1983, the ABC finally showed David Bradbury's *Frontline* (after a much protracted initial rejection), and ATN-7 bought Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly's *First Contact*. Also in 1983, Alec Moggia and Gerry Bonstock's *Lowly Little Singsaps* and Marcus Wilkinson's *Adieu* screened in Sydney city centers (ones that are independently programmed, but representing an improvement on past years). And *First Contact* broke the box-office record at the Sydney Opera House cinema. Then, in January 1984, Harvey Spencer and Richard Turner's feature *Amale Amale* opened at Hoyts in Sydney and Melbourne, almost certainly a first for a documentary. Of course, the topic, Australia's America's Cup win, helped.

These days most local documentaries are produced for industry, or turned out by the government, production houses for departmental, community or educational use. These films are the staple product at Film Australia where a few titles stand out as innovative or engaging, among them John Long's *Pasosans Industry* (1973), Mr. Sybilus Mui (Robert Kipley and Bruce Mair, 1979) and *The House of China* (1979).

Some documentaries, such as those by the Leyland brothers on Melbourn Dialects, are produced specifically for television, and a small number are made independently, usually with the aid of government funds.

For several decades, since the beginning of the 1970s, "documentary" was almost synonymous with the Commonwealth Film Unit (now Film Australia). The career of actress Joan Greenwood and Movement cinema produced from 1970, but their glorious days were long gone. Twenty years earlier, the two companies had high been documentary in well as newsreels and feature producers. Greenwood even won an Oscar in the documentary category, for its record, *The Kokoda Trail* (Joanna Pearce, 1945).

In the 1950s, major documentary producers included Kenneth Parkinson and the Shell Film Unit, with which John Heyer made the magnificent *The Back of Beyond* (1954). During that period also the Wartime Workers Federation Film Unit made 15 films in a mere seven years on film production.

Through the 1960s and early 1970s the most prominent independent documentary were surfing films. Their producers, among them Bob Evans, Paul Whing, Albert Felson and David Elick, introduced traditional distribution problems by creating their own outlets in both and often along the coast of New South Wales.

Surfing film producers such as Elick were able to draw on local funds from the Australia Film Development Corporation (AFDC), established in 1978. In the early 1970s, other documentary filmmakers turned to the Film, Radio and Television Board of the Australian Council for the Arts (subsequently the Australia Council) which assisted films such as *Tiddlers and Friends* (Jeff and Jo Doring, 1971), *Protestant* (Geoffrey Sheehan and Alexander Coad, 1976), *Nagell* — *Californi* (Shoshana Sussman and Jane Carter, 1975), and

*Late — Downtime and Floating* (Michael Biehn, 1978).

In 1975, the Australian Film Commission (AFC) replaced the AFDC. The next year it took over the work of the Australia Council's Film, Radio and Television Board which became the basis for the AFC's Creative Development Branch (CDB), formally established in 1978.

Since the mid-1970s, the CDB, along with the AFC's "Project Development" Branch, has become a major source of funding for documentary filmmakers and these funds have been pivotal in an increase in production. The range of themes being treated and styles being employed has also blossomed.

Recently, television, normally anathema to documentary, helped show the way. In 1980, the ABC began the series, *Checkered*, which ran into the mid-1970s and introduced a new style of social documentary.

Among the social issues of the early 1970s was the beginning of the "second wave" of feminism. A handful of self-taught filmmakers began the Sydney Women's Film Group and began producing films to promote feminism. Also, the group's first film, *Woman's Day* (1973), *Body and Soul* (1973) and *A Film for Women* (1975), are still popular.

Other early films include Patricia Edgar's *Get Art* (1972) and Barbara Crain's *Homecoming: A Film for Women* (1975). In International Women's Year, 1975, the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) and Film Australia produced documentaries on women's issues. From the SAFC came two films under the general title *3-1 and from Film Australia Jane Oke's *Seeing Hot and Feeling Blue*, a film about menstruation, considered in part for the controversy over Film Australia's final cut.*

Most recently, women's film have been most adventurous in style, and less easily categorized. Certainly the most ambitious and important documentary, however, was *Some Love on Mummy* (Margaret Oliver, Megan McMurphy, Jani Thangay and Margot Nash, 1981), a two-hour compilation of the history of Australian women's working lives.

In the 1970s, the Aboriginal land rights movement was also gathering steam. Alessandro Cavallaro documented the black struggle, including the Sydney of the first episode, *Front of the Front* (1972), and *Wing A-Na* (1972). Together with Carolyn Scrace he made *Protestant* (1978), about a 1957 strike by Palm Islander, *We Stay Here* (1979) and *Two Lives* (1981). Gith Levy filmed *Sons of Nomads* (1978) and *Mullock Country* (1978). Geoffrey Gordon documented traditional areas in *A Calendar of Dreams* (1977). Fredrick Mink and Mike Moore (1978), and director of photography, Michael Edlin, made the hybrid *Red — Downtime and Floating* (both 1978).

Recently, Australians have become more involved in documenting their own campaigns. Community leader Rose Goffey worked with Marika Antas and Alec Morgan on *My Survival at Arnhemland* (1979), and Gerry Bonstock collaborated with Alec Morgan on *Lowly Little Singsaps* (1980).

In 1978, concern about the environment was voiced through *Woolfwoolwool* (Pat Fink, Denise White and Peter Garley) and *Green City* (Richard Cole), two films about the "green belt" on development in Sydney. More recently the battle for Tasmania's Franklin River has prompted films such as *The Last Wild River* (1982) and *Franklin* (1983).

There are but a few of the issues taken up by independent filmmakers. Other issues have been covered by institutions such as the Aus-

1. In 1982 ABC told the Stage Rights Commission that Allen was being funded by the CDB, a charge denied and refuted by the Commission. It was an unproven and unproven charges for Australia's independent Documentary Division.

## Documentaries

### Barbara Aysen

Reviews reports and programs

Documentaries are the Cinderella of the film business. Those who make them are not funded by the media the way feature filmmakers are, the films themselves do not always fit the popular conception of cinema. But, in the past decade, it is the documentary more than the feature which has revealed the depth of talent and imagination in the local industry. Australian documentaries have proved more consistently successful overseas, artistically and commercially, than most of the much-vaunted features which have secured foreign distribution.

Until recently, however, a local, independently made documentary was likely to be screened only by the Sydney Filmworks Cooperative, the Australian Film Institute or Perth Institute of Film and Television, and the chances of a sale to local television were, at best, slim.

There have always been some exceptions, but

trading Film and Television School (AFPS) which, since its first, select training course in 1974, has produced a diverse series of documentaries, from Phil Noyce's uncritical profile of a guru and a brick leader in *Cancer and Politics* (1974), to Pam Green's examination of prostitution in *People Don't Talk About It* (1977), and Gilly Cooke's witty view of the virtues of condoms in *Getting It On* (1979).

In 1977, the AFPS also produced a "training film", a dramatized documentary called *Me and Douglas* (Martin Amis and David Hay) which detailed the working lives of women employed in a cinema parking plant. The film became a cause célèbre when the AFPS took legal action to prevent its release.

Although most Australian documentaries are made by amateurs, it is those made independently, by self-employed producers and directors, which have proved the most significant. Theatrical and television screenings have opened a large audience for some.

For example, *The East Tasmanian* (1978) attracted international attention and caused some discussion at home when Aboriginal and white activists questioned the accuracy of its title and its angers at land-rights demands by today's Tasmanian Aboriginals. David Bradbury's *Frontline* (1979), profiling Vietnam war correspondents, Neil Dorn, has been widely seen around the world and was nominated for a 1981 American Academy Award, only the fifth Australian film to be nominated. Chris Noonan's *Stepping Out* (1980) has introduced a worldwide audience to a new view of the traditionally handicapped and shifted to a host of awards along the way.

Many of Australia's most impressive documentaries have been shot offshore, among them *Talkback and Friends* (Jill and St Denning, 1971), Gary Kidson's *Trashed and Cracked* (1976), *Chasing the Needle* (Martin Amis, Mavis Robertson and Denise Ross, the 1981 film of a drug rehabilitation centre in Vietnam, *Angels of War* (Andrew Pike, Hank Nelson and Gavin Doves, 1982), about the treatment of Papua New Guineans captured during the war in the Pacific, and *First Contact* (Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly, 1983), documenting the first European encounters into the New Guinea highlands. The latter two, along with *Frontline* and *For Love or Money*, signal Australian filmmakers' new-found enthusiasm for comparative documentaries, after the success of Peter Luck's television series, *The Fabulous Century*.

Among the success stories, Alby Mangels' *World Safari* deserves a mention. A crudely-made travelogue, it became one of the top-grossing Australian films of 1980-81. It was a success because of its late appeal and because Mangels' and his partner took advantage of the film's exhibition. In the style of the *Great Outdoors*, they turned screenings at the beach, and in country and suburban halls into crowded events with enviable results.

Success has brought a form of strength to local documentary filmmakers: the market is widening, but still very limited. Moreover, documentary filmmakers had to lobby hard to have their films included in the state Government's 1981 package of tax concessions for investors in Australian films. And lobbying continues to try to win a better deal for the AFC's Creative Development Branch, usually short of funds and still a crucial source of backing for many documentary filmmakers.

## Film Criticism

### Adrian Martin

Dean of Film Studies, Melbourne College of Advanced Education

The past of Australian cinema what is it that has kept me laughing at three during all this time as a film critic, promoting its debanking this film in thus, engaging in serious polemical arguments and generally producing the best direction for our national cinema?

The answer is a sad, ironic, disheartened word: duty. Not exactly the duty of a patriot played into the "I love Australia", pump-up nationalism which by now is the official policy of most local film institutions; more like the duty reluctantly undertaken by a citizen who has been engaged into obedience by the solemn virtues of "Australian film culture". To my local patrons, who love films, it seems that Australian cinema itself, by necessity, be the most important story on the film agenda. Institutions such as Cinema Papers and Filmnews, university, college and school courses everywhere, and the general orientation of public debate all testify to this on-going, unending need.

Yet, there is a truck, a sleight-of-hand involved in all this. The struggle with the fabled dream of an Australian cinema is waged in an eternal present: there is always a tick to take, some rushed shorthand to be negotiated. Duty propels me forth on one occasion: don't look back, cinema is the handy, eternal condition of Australian "film culture". For its history is a veritable kaleidoscope of ambivalence. The drive to see the Australian cinema at any cost has led to a conscious overvaluation of films as aesthetic marvels and significant cultural events. It is enough to make a film buff cry.

When I reflect on what I have written in this column I wonder how I could manage to affix samples of the local product as they would fit overseas models of excellence. As Peter Way and Fred Sengels really the search is unrelenting and complexity of Australian Society and Alan Patrick's Art Bruce Resonance and The Patrick (only as tough and three filmmakers as John Carpenter and James DePina) and Fred Sengels hope to be as spectacularly pretentious as art-house directors as Warren Henry? Do Peter Hill and Georgeanne from Wollongong still look like authentic signposts of some-way urban experience? Do *Against The Grain* and *Serious Underlings* truly reveal the heartbeat of a radical Australian cinema?

A steadily growing disenchantment with the whole "sell-point" of bold "Australia film culture" came to a head for me with films such as *For Love and Maturity*. When Australian films tried directly and lavishly to fulfil some of the richest traditions of narrative cinema, in genre-type genres such as the romantic melodrama and the musical, then fundamentalism imposed became clear once and for all.

There is no real style in the Australian cinema, style being the organic, dynamic and physical process whereby meanings are expressed and kicked around. Sure, there is style in ornamentation (Phil Noyce) and knock-

[Gillian Armstrong], there is meaning or bland, dramatic statements within a dreamy realistic, television-style Australianism (John Duigan and Tom Cowell), but nothing resembling a fruitful, intelligent marriage between the two. This has also to do with the fact that Australian film culture is hardly a film culture at all but instead a desire within the film-making sector of people, basically saturated in the historical appreciation of the cinema through film reviews and the like, develops less and less with the spaces of time, young film-school aesthetes who are not likely to become Australia's official dramatic cinema.

It used to be said of Australian films that they portrayed "creative losers", today it is the filmmakers who suffer from the trait, as demonstrated by a real fear of full-blooded filmic expression and an arrogant devotion of the cinema's language and traditions.

In my view, beyond several films such as *Breaker Morant* which make their mark as above the level of a decent television, Australian cinema adds up to a few, truly stylish films by any standards, such as *Mad Max*, *The Last Wave* and *Chen Kaichen*, a greater odd-ball director who deserves his piece of midnight movie-cult fame (Jim Sharman), a few filmmakers who can be depended upon to deliver the conventional, expertly and playfully (*The General* and *Richard Franklin*), and, on the fringe, a slightly rich and elegant mainstream masterpiece, Michael Lee's *The Medical Research*. But there is no equivalent of *Raging Bull*, no *The Deer*, *Probably*, no *Passion*. As "impaired" an Australian film critic as I might sometimes be, I have to confirm that my heart is elsewhere.

## Film Studies (NSW)

### Susan Dermody and John Tulloch

Lecturer in Film, New South Wales Institute of Technology, and Associate Professor, English and Linguistics, Macquarie University

During the past 18 years, film and television study has become established in several corners at tertiary institutions in Sydney: the New South Wales Institute of Technology (NSWIT), University of NSW, Macquarie University, and Sydney University, as well as significant departments at Ku-ring-gai College and Sydney College of the Arts, and the promise of future developments at Nipessa College. There are even signs of an offshoot in seven studies becoming established in the Full-Time Programs of the Australian Film and Television School (AFPS), as present the Open Program runs a kind of (night) back graduate diploma in media study in which students receive college papers from courses offered elsewhere in Australia.

These centres have had fluctuating fortunes; the most recent seem to have been those which have been incorporated into programs as areas of major study, as at NSWIT and perhaps Macquarie, rather than being grafted on to existing course structures. Such centres have seemed to flourish best when it is possible to do film and television production work alongside theory and history.

During the past decade there have been fluctuating theoretical emphases, too. One has moved through what has been gleefully dubbed the "post-Marxist" phase and is now expanding to the "post-structuralist" one. The first of these schools of thought was derived from (times) the British translation and dissemination of postmodernist French writing in the veritable sense of work derived from Freud and Marx, via models of of Saussurean linguistics. The



Primary Diploma course. The College also considered its annual two-week film festival based on a director or theme of national interest. Education in 1960: D. W. Griffith in 1962, Silent Comedy in 1963, etc.

While there were isolated pockets of activity in this field in the 1950s in tertiary institutions — Bill Perkins in Tasmania, for example — there was little sign of widespread development. There were, of course, those regular visits of English tertiary students from the secondary schools to screenings of the literary classics, but that did little to promote an interest in film in its own right. It should also be noted that film-making became established in certain institutions far more slowly because of the supposed vocational opportunities and the fact that the results of the course could be measured in tangible terms.

In the early 1970s, sparked by Whitlock and the rapid growth in tertiary enrolments and accompanied by the renaissance of the Australian film industry, a climate existed which fostered the widespread development of Film Studies in the universities. In Victoria, at least, the formation of the Territory Screen Education at Victoria, and its several extensions, and for secondary and primary teachers the Association of Teachers of Film and Video (the genesis of ATOM), with its publication of *Metro magazine*, provided much needed focal points around which this area of study could develop.

Also significant was the range of film courses offered by the Media Centre, and John Frow and Ian Muir in particular, at the newly established La Trobe University, and the subsequent expansion of Cinema Studies courses. Since then, film study has become part of a number of universities in every state, even Melbourne University has had a very small Distinction with it.

Subsequent flowering has included the institutionalisation of the Australian Film and Television School, particularly the work of its Open Program and the National Graduate Diploma Scheme which operates in every Australian state. There is also the biennial film conference conducted by the Australian Screen Studies Association (ASSA) in New South Wales and, to demonstrate the sophistication and legitimacy of the discipline, there is another biennial conference which explores the interrelationship between Film and History.

The early years at the Coburg Teachers' College in the 1960s approached the teaching of film through close analysis and a concern with the ways in which it communicates content, composition, lighting, editing, sound, etc. To this end a range of short films and extracts was combined with popular feature, foreign language and silent films.

Since that time this institution has worked out its area of film study centred for the moment and expertise of its staff and students against the background of the shifting overseas currents. The early serious approach, the interest in genre film, Latin and postmodernism, cinema, Auteurism, Metz, structural linguistics, Levi-Strauss, Propp and the emphasis on narrative discourse have all shared the limelight at one stage or another.

Whichever the label, however, this stage is still in its formative stages. The bulk of any course in the study of film must still be an attempt to illuminate the complex relationship between the artist (filmmaker), the commentators and the audience.

## National Film Archive

Rory Edmondson

Guest: National Film Archive

"Orphan of the Wilderness" ... or  
"The Breaking of the Drought"?

The National Film Archive is more than an archive. It is the reformation of an idea, and one of the most remarkable and least remarked cultural developments of the last 40 years has been the formation of this film repository and its location throughout the world.

(Editor: London, Centre of the National Film Archive, London, c. 1978)

These words from the diaries of film archivists, even more so than in 1973, preface my report to the Australian Film and Television School of a five-month, world-wide study of film archives which *Cinema Papers* published in a condensed form in its September 1974 issue.<sup>1</sup> That I was the first Australian to undertake such a project indicated the underdevelopment of local film archive activity compared with, for example, Europe or North America. The report, and especially *Cinema Papers'* consideration, was widely read. It subsequently influenced the setting up of the independent New Zealand Film Archive and is now being read in the (future of Australia's) National Film Archive (NFA) has become a major issue in recent circles.

*Cinema Papers* and the NFA are, in a sense, of the same vintage. The NFA was established as a definite staff unit of the National Library in 1973 (though its origins go back to the 1930s). Although the growth of staff and resources has in no way kept pace with its development in other ways, it has clearly come of age. In 10 years, its collections have increased five fold and range 10-fold. Sophisticated systems and standards have developed from simple beginnings. It has produced film archives with individual capabilities and international perspective. In place in the industry and film culture has been established as a repository, an indispensable resource, a source of plans and material. It has contributed to many hundreds of productions. Its collection growth has made possible much of the Australian content of film education, research and analysis.

As a result of "The Last Film Show", film restoration and the personal "Cinema Australia" retrospective, the NFA has begun to give substance to its cultural role of not only acquiring and preserving the moving image heritage but also making it available and accessible to the world. The operative word is *begin*. So will 1984 be the end of the beginning?

The past 10 years have been a pioneering adventure. So, at a different level, will the next 10 years. All being well, what might one hope to find on walking into the NFA in 1994? At the risk of indulging some wishful thinking, I venture some personal ideas of the NFA a decade from now.

One would I hope find an institution with a high profile, a serious commitment to its collection, activities and standards to comprehend the whole nature of the moving image in society (be it art, technology, education, communication, history, industry or

whatever) in its own right and not in an aspect of something else. It would reflect — accurately, I hope — the rising cultural status of the medium. The NFA would have a sense of its own necessity as a concept conceived in response to the nature and social impact of a 20th Century popular medium. Its commitment to the highest standards of preservation would be given meaning by its equal commitment to making the moving image heritage accessible in every sense of the term, then and in the future. As the source of that heritage, it follows that the NFA would, by definition, be committed to the future of the medium. So it would be neither a graveyard for old films nor a mere passive service of demands and enquiries, but a positive and moulding force, and a point of reference for community and industry.

It would surely be much easier to find and use. Whatever its headquarters are eventually located, it would have a substantial presence in Sydney and Melbourne, and access centres in other capitals. Its headquarters would have functional importance, giving advice and making facilities for preservation, storage, public and private viewing, study, discussion, exhibition, a moving image museum and so on available to the public, the industry and other institutions, as well. Multicultural? Yes. Practical and accessible? Yes.

As well as being a service resource, it would be a cultural focus and tourist attraction. Perhaps there would be standing units from famous films on display for public enjoyment (as well as the preserved film stuff), or the chance to view films of all formats projected in a cinema equipped to exhibit them in the way they were made to be seen, or the opportunity to open a film. Film with the most significant meaning (knowing that the skills of film obsolete art have been revised and nurtured by the NFA).

Though hardly affluent, it will be far better funded and have better resources than at present (it will also be entrepreneurial in raising income to supplement its government grant). The work of film archives, at a charge as the present, will be more sustainable — and defended — in its own right. Hopefully, by then time, nothing of permanent value would be in danger of loss through insufficient funding.

Similarly, selection and acquisition activity would be sufficiently developed to survey and record all Australian production and exhibition. The NFA would be acquiring all material of permanent value — despite with the aid of its equitable voluntary deposit system — before there was any likelihood of loss.

The NFA's relationship to the industry and the film culture will have become closer and more organic. It will be an obvious part of its infrastructure, with daily acquisition and access contact, cross-use of facilities and exchange of staff. Its relationship to other cultural bodies will be more clearly defined, including its relations with other bodies engaged in film archives in Australia and Asia-Pacific. It will have established a role as a co-ordinator, centre of expertise and a support agency.

Internationally, it would have reached a parity with kindred institutions in other countries and would be contributing its share to the development of its field world-wide. It would be actively representing and promoting the Australian moving image heritage overseas.

It will be far more accessible and be making full use of computer and video technology. For the researcher, the collection will be much larger, more diverse, better documented and a greater percentage of it will be accessible. There will, hopefully, be no artificial limits on access (such as the current restrictions). Beyond that, the NFA will provide intimate, support and practical activities which make the heritage more acces-

<sup>1</sup> For those who do not recognise them, the *Waves of Film* series Australian feature films made in 1936 and 1938 respectively.

<sup>2</sup> *Cinema Papers*, No. 4, p. 141.







- 1 **Don's Party**
  - 2 **Sendin' You For Away**
  - 3 **The Man from Hong Kong** (Brian Truscudd Smith, 1970)
- This is with a bonus list that I thought I would include: Clint Eastwood's last written role years ago and shortly before his death.
- 4 **Pure Skin**
  - 5 **Newsfront**
  - 6 **Site** (Stephen Wallace, 1960)
  - 7 **Mad Max**
  - 8 **The F2 Hidden** (Michael Thornton, 1971)
  - 9 **Wider in Felicity**
  - 10 **The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith**
  - 11 **Paul Smith** (John Thomas, 1970)
  - 12 **The Last Wave** (Peter West, 1977)
  - 13 **Be Search of Anne (John Smith, 1970)**

Close, but not close enough  
 23A (John Smith, 1970), **Dances**  
 (West, 1974), **Newsfront** (John  
 Michael Thornton, 1970) **The Devil's**  
**Playground** and **Newsfront** to **Newsfront**



Lonely Hearts (John No. 7)

## Nigel Buesst

Madonna: Madonna's Madonna Book  
 (Baker)

In no particular order but with the two  
 lists by Peter West (a dead list):  
 1. **Graveyard** (Tom Caven, 1970)  
 2. **Breaker** (Morris)  
 3. **George and Neelie** (Clay Des, 1970)  
 4. **First Contact** (Robert Anderson and  
 Bob Connolly, 1963)  
 5. **My Brilliant Career**  
 6. **Suey Parson's John Kennedy** (1963)  
 7. **Catchin' He Nigger Here You**  
 8. **Sons of Nantucket** (Clay Des, 1971)  
 9. **Newsfront** (Peter West, 1971)  
 10. **The President** (Peter West, 1970)  
 11. **Man of Flowers**

## Dean Chamberlin

The Adolescent: Adolescence

In alphabetical order:  
 1. **Breaker** (Morris)  
 2. **Only's Child** (Donald Crook, 1970)

Gallop  
 1. **Lonely Hearts** (Phil Cox, 1963)  
 2. **Newsfront** (Morris)  
 3. **Moving On** (Michael Parkinson, 1967)  
 4. **My Brilliant Career**  
 5. **Newsfront**  
 6. **Point in Hanging Rock**  
 7. **The Year of Living Dangerously**

## Barry Cohen

Minister for Home Affairs and  
 Employment: Culture

Although Cohen Papers ended far  
 at the end of the century (1991),  
 I have included 11 which are of such a  
 high standard that I felt it unfair to  
 eliminate one. In no particular order:  
 1. **My Brilliant Career**  
 2. **The Man from Sassy River** (George  
 Miller, 1963)  
 3. **Plus Lap** (John Wilson, 1961)  
 4. **Don's Party**  
 5. **Sendin' You For Away**  
 6. **Breaker** (Morris)  
 7. **Catchin' He Nigger Here You**  
 8. **Gallop**  
 9. **The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith**  
 10. **The Year of Living Dangerously**  
 11. **Although** (Paul Johnson) (John  
 Caven) has not been selected, I  
 believe it is of equal standard to the  
 above

## Keith Connolly

The Adolescent: Adolescence

In no particular order:  
 1. **Sendin' You For Away** (in spite of  
 structural flaws, my first achievement  
 to date in social realism. Cur-  
 rently the best portrait of Australia  
 at work, the characters coming over with  
 sympathy and humor in an authentic  
 environment)

2. **Newsfront**: A movement, richly  
 sensitive back at the moment just  
 before the outbreak of the Vietnam  
 war, the characters coming over with  
 sympathy and humor in an authentic  
 environment

3. **Water of Our Dreams** (John Douglas,  
 1961): Not only wrote several provoca-  
 tive social themes into an exciting  
 personal drama

4. **The Devil's Playground**: A delicate  
 and involving mixture of lost love  
 and the search for meaning in a  
 post-war world

5. **The Year of Living Dangerously**: A delicate  
 and involving mixture of lost love  
 and the search for meaning in a  
 post-war world

6. **Point in Hanging Rock**: Never mind  
 the heavy story, but the atmospheric  
 quality. Still the most powerful novel  
 Australian literature

7. **Plus Lap**: In the age of "Crazy  
 American, a movie", a playfully satirical  
 and moderate meditation of popular  
 legend

8. **Breaker** (Morris) (Ken Connolly, 1963)  
 9. **The Adolescent**: An early, remarkable  
 child study, written in a style that  
 is almost flawless, but the film is  
 a contemporary masterpiece

10. **Lonely Hearts**: Imperfectly-sung  
 social reality that nevertheless  
 beautifully because, in spite of their  
 emotional obstacles, the characters  
 human compassion believably

11. **Breaker** (Morris) (Ken Connolly, 1963)  
 12. **Newsfront** (Morris)  
 13. **Moving On** (Michael Parkinson, 1967)  
 14. **My Brilliant Career**  
 15. **Newsfront**  
 16. **Point in Hanging Rock**  
 17. **The Year of Living Dangerously**

18. **Although** (Paul Johnson) (John  
 Caven) has not been selected, I  
 believe it is of equal standard to the  
 above

## Jill Crommelin

The West Australian: Point

In no particular order:  
 1. **The Office Poetic**  
 2. **Newsfront** (Morris)  
 3. **Point in Hanging Rock**  
 4. **Gallop**  
 5. **Don's Party**  
 6. **The Old Angry Man** (Tom Jeffrey  
 1970)  
 7. **My Brilliant Career**  
 8. **Newsfront**  
 9. **The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith**  
 10. **Plus Lap**

## Debi Enker

Cinema Papers: Melbourne

In alphabetical order:  
 1. **The Clinic** (David Stevens, 1963)  
 2. **Newsfront** (Phil Nixon, 1967)  
 3. **Left Lovers** (Tom Jeffrey, 1970)  
 4. **Gallop** (Morris)  
 5. **Mad Max**  
 6. **Mad Max 2**  
 7. **Mad Max 3**  
 8. **Mad Max 4**  
 9. **Mad Max 5**  
 10. **Mad Max 6**  
 11. **Mad Max 7**  
 12. **Mad Max 8**  
 13. **Mad Max 9**  
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# Sandra Hall

The Quietus Sydney

In no particular order:

- 1 The Year of Living Dangerously
- 2 The Devil's Playground
- 3 Master of Our Dreams
- 4 Breaker Morant
- 5 The Getting of Wisdom
- 6 Muriel's Wedding
- 7 Mouth to Mouth
- 8 The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith
- 9 Newsfront
- 10 In Search of Anna

# Paul Harris

Five Days Forward - 2000  
Melbourne

- 1 Sir
- 2 Newsfront
- 3 The Devil's Playground
- 4 Mad Max 2
- 5 Broken Men
- 6 Bushrangers (Paul Sayers, 1975)
- 7 Firelight (David Mackay, 1974)
- 8 25A
- 9 Pure Skin
- 10 Muriel's Wedding

# John Hindle

ABC TV Green Guide (The Age)  
Melbourne

- 1 Gallipoli
- 2 White of Our Dreams
- 3 Breaker Morant
- 4 Newsfront
- 5 Bushrangers (Gordon Armstrong, 1967)
- 6 Dirty (John Richardson, 1961)
- 7 The Getting of Wisdom
- 8 The Year of Living Dangerously
- 9 Mouth to Mouth
- 10 Storm Boy

# Ivan Hutchinson

The Seven Nations and Video Age  
Melbourne

Australia still has to make a great movie, but certainly it has made some fine anniversary films. As my personal professor in that sort of film is the proto book — a strong narrative, a literary touch, some great winners for the character and professional technical skills — here, in alphabetical order, a "10 Best" since 1970, including one made by overseas directors which still must count as Aussie films (most both private copies of our country and way of life that the local best have) included on *Breaker Morant*. One would hardly complain about the quality of films from Australia for anywhere else of that date in well-studied review had decided in this judgement of a good play by Kenneth Ross.

*The Last Wave* is my book, Peter Weir's most successful film in this time, disturbing and clearly loved. *Mad Max 2* is a great film, but not always a great crime movie. *Overport* isn't better than the original. *Mouth to Mouth* John Chapman has

never worked with bigger budgets and television performers but for very funny, well-observed and observed. *Newsfront* about what it was like in the field.

*Newsfront* Still one of the best original and especially radical of recent Australian films. One of our few movies to give women a clear name on the home political post.

*Point of No Return* Freshly re-released, but the beautiful and imaginative quality of this film has not yet been captured by time or even commercial television is a recent idea (good).

*Sir* (Tim Rothall, 1911) Lots of things don't work too well in this film, but that doesn't make it better, without the public acceptance of this one, would it have an industry at all?

*Standby Ten Far Away* The first feature produced by the South Australian Film Corporation remains one of the most important "Aussie" at all times, a well-observed, well-acted and beautiful film.

*White of Our Dreams* Powerful look at the Aboriginal problem, one powerful film for one Australian who has released.

*Whiteout* Classically beautiful film of myth, mystery, naturalistic and one. Philosophical and dramatic in Russian style, and stamped with its highly individual style.



Gallipoli poster No. 5

# Neil Jillett

The Age Melbourne

- 1 Point of No Return
- 2 Newsfront
- 3 Master of Our Dreams
- 4 Mad Max 2
- 5 Sir
- 6 The Getting of Wisdom
- 7 Lonely Hearts
- 8 Moving Out
- 9 Standby Ten
- 10 Storm Boy



Point of No Return No. 4

# Tina Kaufman

Filmways Sydney

Here is my list of 10 films from the past decade I don't want to see less or favorite, but rather that these are the films which marked best for me when I first saw them, and that the experience which has left me moved along.

- 1 Pure Skin
- 2 Love Letters from Terence Brad
- 3 The 13th Hour
- 4 Newsfront
- 5 Mad Max and Mad Max 2
- 6 Sir
- 7 Muriel's Wedding
- 8 Wrong Side of the Road (Mad Lander, 1961)
- 9 Standby Ten
- 10 Storm Boy

# Dougal MacDonald

The Canberra Times Canberra

- 1 The Fan Five
- 2 Sir and the Empress (Donald Cross, 1912)
- 3 The Gold Angel's Mist
- 4 Bushrangers (John Denwood, 1913)
- 5 Goodbye Paradise (Carl Schuck, 1911)
- 6 Mad Max 2
- 7 The Invisible Dog
- 8 Lonely Hearts
- 9 Miss of Flowers
- 10 Margaret (John Hanco, 1910)
- 11 Sir
- 12 The Devil's Playground

# Adrian Martin

Melbourne State College

- 1 Muriel's Wedding
- 2 Mad Max
- 3 The Last Wave
- 4 Journey to the End of Night (Peter Timmer, 1911)
- 5 Muriel's Wedding (Katie 1911)
- 6 Sir (John Denwood, 1913)
- 7 Newsfront, 1910
- 8 Dreams Come True (John Stevens, 1912)
- 9 Whiteout (John Hanco, 1910)
- 10 Standby Ten

- 3 Muriel's Wedding (John Denwood, 1913)
- 10 Goodbye Paradise (Carl Schuck, 1911)
- 11 White of Our Dreams (Gordon Armstrong, 1967)
- 12 I have decided to leave some time from the recent boom in Super 8 state films

# Brian McFarlane

Cosmo Films Melbourne

In no particular order:

- 1 My Brilliant Career
- 2 The Year of Living Dangerously
- 3 Bushrangers (Richard Franklin, 1911)
- 4 White of Our Dreams
- 5 Point of No Return
- 6 Breaker Morant
- 7 Gallipoli
- 8 Lonely Hearts
- 9 Muriel's Wedding
- 10 The 13th Hour
- 11 The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith
- 12 Standby Ten

- 1) Profoundness of literary adaptation among best Australian films but best looking, leading to a fairly common, dramatic cinema.
- 2) If this list could be very slightly extended I would add *Newsfront* (John Denwood, 1910), the only attractive Australian comedy, and *Standby Ten* (John Denwood, 1910).
- 3) The fact that the look of *White of Our Dreams* seems so far from the time when it was made.
- 4) I am struck by the accuracy of *Whiteout* making a truly gripping work with contemporary Australia and away, is consequently, by over-valuing *Whiteout*'s The 13th Hour.
- 5) *Mouth to Mouth* and *White of Our Dreams* seem the only other candidates in the field and they both, interesting as they are, run out of camera just!

# Scott Murray

Cosmo Films Melbourne

- 1 Whiteout
- 2 White of Our Dreams
- 3 Point of No Return
- 4 Mad Max 2
- 5 Mad Max
- 6 A Personal History of the Australian War
- 7 Goodbye Paradise
- 8 Breaker Morant
- 9 Standby Ten Far Away
- 10 The Last Wave (John Denwood, 1910)
- 11 The "second 10"
- 12 Lonely Hearts, The Devil's Playground, The Last Wave, Paradise (John Denwood, 1910), Bushrangers, Franklin, Sir, Mouth to Mouth, Newsfront, Muriel's Wedding, Pure Skin, Standby Ten, Point of No Return (1910).

# Bert Newton

The Nine Network Melbourne

In no particular order:

- 1 The Man from Snowy River
- 2 Pure Skin
- 3 Pure Skin (Melbourne Murphy, 1910)
- 4 Standby Ten Far Away
- 5 Lonely Hearts
- 6 The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith, 1910



# POINT OF VIEW

*The state of the Australian film industry and its future direction has been a topic vocally debated since the industry's revival in 1970. At a Murdoch University (Perth) seminar in October 1983, producers Philip Adams and Antony I. Ginnane spoke to opposing points of view.*

*In his speech, "Reasons for the Australian film industry", Ginnane examines what he sees as mistakes of the past decade, particularly in the area of government funding, and gives clear indication of how he sees the industry best surviving in the future.*

*Adams, in responding to Ginnane, gives his personal views as to what he sees worthy in the Australian cinema and why it should be encouraged and supported.*



**Antony I. Ginnane**

Perhaps the only qualification I can really claim for being here tonight is that I think I am one of only two producers currently working in Australia to have made a feature film (*Hardcastle*) in Western Australia in the past 20 years. I may not be a legend, but hopefully that credential will prevent my being considered a complete outsider.

*1* Harlequin (1980) Director: Simon Wilson. Producer: Antony I. Ginnane.

In thinking of a title for my address this evening, I played down "Reasons for the Australian Film Industry" but, having spent some time talking with Philip Adams since his elevation to the chairmanship of the Australian Film Commission (AFC), perhaps I should admit that title. In any event, it would be useful to start with some history of the Australian film industry.

Ten years ago, a government-backed Tariff Board inquiry into the exhibition and distribution of film in Australia made a series of recommendations aimed at nurturing, initially by direct government subsidy, an Australian feature film production industry. In 1970, the Federal Parliament had passed the *Australian Film Development Corporation (AFDC) Act* which created an investment bank with funds available for investment in Australian films which met certain criteria. To be eligible, the project needed to be an "Australian film", a term defined "Australian film" to mean, inter alia,

a film that had been made, or will be made, wholly or substantially in Australia. And, in the opinion of the Corporation, has or will have a significant Australian content.

Section 4(2) stated:

In forming an opinion whether a film has or will have a significant Australian content the Corporation will have regard to the subject matter of the film, the place or places where the film was or is to be made, the places of residence of the persons taking part in the making of the film, including actors, musical composers, screen and

technicians, the source from which the money to be used in the making of the film will be derived, the ownership of the film or such in the regard of any company concerned in the making of the film, the ownership of the copyright in the film, and any other matters that it thinks relevant.

In 1973, the Tariff Board inquiry hoped that in the medium term the local film industry would become self-supporting, eliminating the need for continued government subsidy. In part C of the report, referring to theatrical film, the Board stated on page 14,

It has also been the Board's aim to foster the provision of commercial finance for the film industry, partly because this is a desirable long-term objective, and partly because it considers that the huge developmental cost in financing film production can be more appropriately and efficiently supplied by commercial sources. The development of such facilities will take time and require encouragement, and the conditions previously recommended have been designed to do this. Among other things the degree of government assistance awarded in different films will vary and will be proportionately influenced by the proportion of risk and equity on commercial investors are willing to accept. As their confidence and confidence increases with experience and development of the industry, government participation is expected to decline. (Author's notes.)

Unfortunately, many of those advocating the passing of the AFDC legislation and, in 1975, the Australian Film Commission legislation had no desire for the industry ever to be self-supporting, claiming that it should develop

along the lines of a Swedish or Eastern European industry, continually government-subsidized and contributing to the development and enrichment of Australian identity and culture. The Australian Film Commission Act 1975 and then the incentives introduced under amendments to the Australian Income Tax Assessment Act 1936, beginning in 1977, continued to refer to "significant Australian content" as the criterion by which a film became eligible for either AFC assistance or the tax incentives. The 1977 amendments placed that matter in the hands of the Minister for Home Affairs. Subsection 110 of Section 124(1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act effectively redefined the definition of an "Australian film" as per the original Australian Film Development Corporation Act (quoting absent), with some modifications.

So, during the past 10 or 15 years, the term "significant Australian content", as we shall see, was to become the model by which the loss of a commercial, free-enterprise film industry were broken time and time again. Trade unions, federal and state bureaucracies and, ultimately, parliamentarians have succeeded during the past few years, and a "significant Australian content" has been inscribed in mind "exclusive Australian content". This happened despite the continuing evidence that Australia's most successful films included key overseas content from Rachel Roberts in *Panicle at Hanging Rock*, Richard Chamberlain in *The Last Wave* and Edward Woodward in *Breaker Morant*, to name recently. Karl Douglas in *The Man from Snowy River*, Ross Ludman in *Phar Lap* and Linda Blair in *Michael Myer's* and *Spranger Wever* in *The Year of Living Dangerously*—not to mention most of my own productions. It may be debatable whether overseas content was a plus, but it was certainly not a detriment to those films' success.

The so-called theory behind this privileging character was that the purpose of the film industry, domestic and international, was to stand as an aspect of Australian culture. But what is "Australian culture"? Where did your company spend \$1 million providing work for actors, technicians and associated industries in Perth in 1979 for our production *Baroque*, or a year later \$1.5 million in *Adelaide for The Survivor*, or a year later in Cairns \$2.3 million for *Turkey Shoot*, has Australian culture been enhanced? Has Australian culture been abandoned at the subject matter technicians and artists are working on it (international or neo-Australian in setting and inscription in appeal)? Was Shakespeare betraying British culture when he wrote *Comenius or John Caesar's* culture to be defined as an artistic endeavor that appeals only to a university graduate more than 30 years-old who earns at least \$50,000 a year, or is there such a thing as "high culture"? How do you account for millions of people between the ages of 13 and 30 years being scared and exhilarated by the emotionally-oriented *Mad Max: Patrick or Turkey Shoot*? These films are completely at ease with their fate. While many taxpayers may profoundly regret it, these commercially successful films are "pop culture". Many Australians refuse to admit that a very significant part of Australian culture overseas, and is identical to, contemporary American culture. As underlining as it may be to my friend Mr Adams, we have many things in common with our American allies. From McDonalds and Coca-Cola to *Star Wars*: there are the frames of reference for today's cinema audience.

Many "international" Australian films have made significant statements about our society, its moral values and moral dilemmas. *Mad Max* deals with the responsibilities of the individual



*Turkey Shoot* "turned about a fierce reality in the future" (Graham)

to society, *Hafregis* with the dilemma of power, greed and success versus personal happiness, and *Turkey Shoot* warned about a nuclear society in the future. These themes were not uniquely Australian, nor were they uniquely American. They were at least western and perhaps even universal. They all made a statement about our culture and our society. They were all criticized because the Australian physical locale and the story setting were described as either being somewhere in the U.S. or some neo-specific location. Was our cultural expression really affected by this change in setting?

"Significant Australian content"—used as "exclusive Australian content"—has proved a small pocket which has followed the industry through the 100 legislations into the most recent 100A legislation. The device of certification as an Australian film has not been based on any intellectual point system, as was the case in Canada, nor was it based on any expedient criterion, such as the British Body system—although the Tariff Board, it should be noted, used an expedient criterion as one tier of its proposed definition of Australian film. However, it is ultimately based on minimal discretion, which on the one hand allows no certainty to anybody—within *The Return of Captain Jack*—and yet allows investors who come to their portfolios loaded now, as far as the industry is concerned, to be progressively influenced against internationalism by AFC bureaucrats who would, no doubt, be redundant if ever the Australian film industry became self-supporting. In my opinion, the intentions and strategy of the AFC, as film ministers, have been totally and utterly wrong, from its initial misapprehensions of its parliamentary mandate to its most recent, behind-the-scenes lobbying for the latest cuts.

I think it is inevitable and unfortunate to consider the way in which English-speaking Canada, faced with a similar problem in Australia (i.e., to create a film industry from scratch), tried. Canada, like Australia, was English as its main language, just as even greater proximity to, and is culturally influenced dramatically by, the U.S. and had no industries of a film industry.

The Canadian government in 1967 set up the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC). The original CFDC Act was, in many ways, a model for the AFDC Act and the research behind it was heavily drawn upon by the Australian Tariff Board Inquiry. By 1976, the CFDC's scientists, coupled with private investors' ability to write off 100 per cent of their investment (in the certified Canadian film over 12 months, as well as a buoyant secondary market for film public sales), created a vibrant film industry with a number of spectacular successes at the world film office.

Speaking in October 1979 at a University of California seminar on "The Law of Canadian Film Production", the then president of the CFDC, Mike McCabe, set out their assumptions that lay at the base of the CFDC's investment in Canadian films:

1. the objective remained the creation of a feature film industry as an element of Canada's cultural life;
2. the intention of the Canadian politicians was that, in the event possible, the industry be self-sustaining and not an on-going dependent of government; and
3. unless the Canadian industry was commercially successful, which would mean that a few of the people wanted to pay to see its films, the cultural objective would not be achieved; it would not be acceptable to create films only for a small elite, nor could such an elite provide the revenues needed to allow Canadian creators to continue to create in exile.

These objectives, which clearly viewed the Australian situation, required, said McCabe, a 10-point strategy. Let us examine this strategy and see how, in virtually every instance, the AFC moved in exactly the opposite direction, and how the formulation and interpretation of the 100 and 100A incentives further provoked such a strategy failure properly implemented.

Before we do so, however, it is worthwhile drawing briefly the success or failure of McCabe's strategy, in clearly its own relevance to the Australian situation as if it was or could have been successful:

2. N. Roberts and R.E. McLean (eds) *Exposure on the Law of Canadian Film Production* University of Southern California.

An enormous amount of ill-informed comment has appeared in Australian media as to the success or failure of the years 1970, 1980 and 1981 in Canada. The AFC-based position has been that the Canadian experience was a failure, either because it did not manage to reduce the industry losses through 1981-2 or because the films created were internationally-contrasted productions as opposed to specifically indigenous works. The facts are that during that period a number of Canadian films became huge, world box-office successes, notably the youth comedy *Porky's*, which income 20th Century-Fox's second biggest world-wide gross in 1981-82, grossing 130 million. *Mirabelle*, which became a surprise success hit in 1981 for Paramount, grossing worldwide 120 million plus; the Jack Lemmon starer *Travis*, which grossed 515 million for Fox; the string of successful Canadian horror films from David Cronenberg — *Rabid*, *The Brood* and *Screamers* — which among them grossed 560 million worldwide; and the international success such as *Pine Night* and *Terror Train*, the prestige vehicles such as *Quest for Fire* and *Atlantic City*, with Burt Lancaster, and the occasional flourish comedy such as *Middle-Age Crazy*.

Most of these films are financed by patron for loans in the United States, rather than by the Canadian film industry, which has been recognized in Toronto with world-wide recognition for Canadian producers, technicians and facilities and, in my view, were just a representative of Canadian culture as low-budget, indigenous, financially-disastrous productions seen in Don Siegel's *Gone With the Wind*.

But raised the bottom to burn in 1982 is not the lack of world-wide profitability to Canadian product, but the decision by the Revenue Department to switch the deposit, consolidation write-off from 12 months to two years. This, combined with the unrealistic, projected, pseudo cash-flow schedules provided by inexperienced Canadian producers in 1979, 1980 and 1981, has caused a major shift in the industry and the greater involvement of certain risk takers, major investors moved out of Canadian film in 1982. The Canadian scene was quiet in 1983, whether it will become again in 1984 will largely depend on circumstances not directly related to the performance of Canadian film to date.

It is important to remember, however, as I have noted to McCabe's 10 objectives, his plan worked in Canada and could have worked here. The current Canadian problem is not caused by the failure of McCabe's strategies but by his pulling on the part of Canadian Revenue and governments. So let us now look at McCabe's objectives.

1. McCabe: If we are to have a feature film industry, it must first be a group of participants who must share the money, assemble the creative team, get the film made and sell it. We must, therefore, focus on developing and supporting producers.

My comment: The AFC and the state corporations consistently championed writers and directors at the expense of producers. The Australian Film and Television School focused on financial training. The European style of filmmaking was fostered by the AFC, the state funding bodies and their followers in the specialist film media.

2. McCabe: A country the size of Canada is not going to have an unlimited number of producers. We must therefore select the successful ones, cut out the unsuccessful and keep our eyes open for new talent.

My comment: To the extent the AFC or the state funding bodies did promote producers, the view was that other they

should support frequently those who are at least successful but culturally pure (the New South Wales Film Corporation's view), or they should not be seen to be supporting a successful producer more than once or twice (the AFC's view). Since the money required to bring in more and more new talent. Talent for what? To lose more and more public money, of course!

3. McCabe: Unless Canadians are prepared to have access to foreign films limited and the exhibition of Canadian films legally restricted, we are going to have to make films that can compete with the best in the world because:

(a) in Canada itself, we have to match the best films produced by other countries if we are to convince Canadians that they should pay their money to see our films;

(b) if we are to have the stars and the production values that will bring Canadians to see our films, the budgets will be too high to recover our costs in our own relatively small market; and

(c) we must, therefore, earn revenue at the rest of the world, and to do this we must lose the themes, the stars and the production values to meet our requirements.

My comment: The AFC and the state corporations, by and large, consistently endorsed the economic policies of the American and Australian Equity Association of Australia and, to a lesser extent, the Australian Theatrical and Amusement Employees Association as a means to the maintenance of American artistic and specialist industries. Despite the priority of local screenwriters, any suggestion of reported screenplay was an anathema, so that the Australian content sections of IIRA and IERA prevented our producers being packaged to international standards.

4. McCabe: We must not be afraid to associate with people in other countries who can help us compete, but we must ensure that we do not lose control to them. We must use the association with others to promote and develop our own producers, directors, stars and crews.

My comment: Here the AFC and the IERA actually really threw the baby out with the water. No meaningful attempt was made by either the AFC or the AFCDC to create an co-production treaties of any form, although some half-hearted negotiations proceeded with France. The AFC failed to design a practical and useful co-production treaty with the U.S., even though the U.S. was in this regard, even for *Australian Film* it was to be commercially successful. Nor did negotiations ever proceed with Britain, Canada or New Zealand. On the other hand, the most important protection and overall were built into the IERA legislation to ensure that any only did control stay with Australians, but virtually everything else as well.

5. McCabe: We must have a consistent strategy for developing and promoting our own directors, writers, performers and technical people. We must create our own stars.

My comment: Here at least the AFC tried, with its publicity machine and its huge presence over the years in the Cinema Film Festival, but, generally, the few Australian stars that we have (for instance, Royce Brown and Helen Mirren) were created by television — the Crawfords, Blecher and Henry, and Grondy's, and the new rash of

mini-series — rather than feature. Only Mel Gibson, Jack Thompson and Judy Davis can really be said to have emerged exclusively from feature. The AFC's producers were either infatuated with boys or women's legs, and were generally mediocre.

6. McCabe: Given that we make top-quality films we must market them more aggressively at home and abroad, and we must take steps to get our films into distribution and exhibition systems where we are unfairly restricted.

My comment: Here both the AFC, by its marketing Department, and the New South Wales Film Corporation (NSWFC), by the establishment of the Australian Film Office Inc in Los Angeles, attempted to create strategies to market the films produced, but the AFC's marketing officers privately admitted that the type of production demanded only limited foreign television, American art-house and limited American cable release. To help justify their existence they concentrated on giving our films away to every film festival that wanted to show them. Australian films came and went as the flavor of the year in Europe, New York, etc. Very few dollars came back. Only *Mad Max 2*, *The Private Movie*, *The Man From Snowy River*, *The Year of Living Dangerously* and, to a lesser extent, *Gallop* have crossed proper world-wide distribution by a major to date. By proper distribution, I mean full, mainstream, theatrical distribution, followed by cable, television and video release worldwide. To a lesser extent, a combination of domestic and international distributors.

*Patrick*, *Mad Max*, *Turkey Shoot*, *The Chien Raconteur*, *Baroque* and *Return of Captain Jack* have also received some measure of proper distribution. *Gallop* takes out of some 180. The NSWFC's Australian Film Office Inc, but become a joke. It has been the thousands of dollars spent on its operations but has never really had marketable films to sell. *My Brilliant Career* being the exception.

7. McCabe: The AFCDC should use its limited budget to lever other funds into the film industry. AFCDC money should be spent where the risk is highest and the money sweetest — the development stage — to help the producers get the package together. My comment: Rather than levering funds into the film industry, the AFC has consistently lobbied against attempts to take the industry out of its control by placing its funding in the hands of private enterprise. In the 1982-83 tax year, it compensated against United American and Australian Film Producers Pty Ltd (UAA) and other agencies attempting to raise money via Section 51(1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act, ultimately succeeded in having Part IVA of that Act used against them. If these groups had been embraced, who knows where the industry might now be, particularly in UAA only involved in production, that had generated a profit. Following the 1982-83 tax year, when at least it seemed as if the marketplace had accepted the IERA shelter and was considering making independent investment decisions that displaced the AFC, Joseph Skermetis, the AFC chief executive on whose advice (Maurice for Henry Allister) Barry Cohen relied (extensively in my

3. Since the time of the speech, *Empty Streets* has also received a successful distribution in the U.S. — Ed

optionally, with the help of the APC's political advisors, organized the reduction of the 150 per cent deduction to 113 per cent and a dramatic increase in the APC's funding, attempting, yet again, to shoot up its position."

8. McCabe: Some of the CPDCC's budget should continue to be available for films of cultural significance and where new and promising talent is involved. Even here, however, we must insist upon some possibility of commercial return. The absence of that possibility means that few people will see the film and little money will be returned to the producer so that he or she may continue to produce.

My comment: Clearly, what has happened over the past 10 years is the exact reverse of that philosophy, where the APC has labored to make "culturally significant" the sole lodestone for investment.

9. McCabe: The CPDCC must work to create a situation in which the institutions and agencies that finance other industries are brought into the film industry.
- My comment: My comments here are at far point 7.

10. McCabe: The rules of the game must be stabilized for four or five years so that the CPDCC and the tax incentive can do the job they were designed to do, create an environmentally viable film industry.
- My comment: The rules of the film game in Australia have been tinkered with an at least a dozen occasions during the past 10 years. The APC consistently labored to change the ground rules, from 155/130 per cent write-off to two points to 100/84 (130 per cent write-off in one year with the film to finish one year after investment), through 100/84 (133 per cent write-off in one year). Tragically, each change has been at a critical period in the development of a self-sustaining local film industry — most notably the last — and without much consultation with the people who make up the film industry. At the same time, the APC has exercised with the certification process, first trying to take it over and then giving it back to the Department of Home Affairs. It has labored against Section 51(1), interfered with discussions relevant to the prospectus provisions of the Uniform Companies Code, etc. No industry during the past 10 years has had the ground rules changed more often than the film industry. Who is to blame? In large measure, the blame must be with the APC.

Despite the tragedy of mismanagement and mistakes, the APC has managed, from time to time, to even protect its own "golden banner." Most notable of recent was when James Mitchell, former executive director of the Film and Television Production Association of Australia, consumed its reputation. Deleto, Harkins and Sells, which showed that of the 247 films produced from 1976 to 1982 only nine returned a profit to investors. Skyways (that had APC operations) do some quick telephone research, which included asking producers, as to whom films they (the APC) had invested, whether they had made a profit. At a guess, the APC was pleased to trumpet to the world its well made point that the Deleto, Harkins and



Mad Max: "Australia's most successful film" (Kinema)

Sells report was fatally flawed, and that the Australian film industry was in an increasingly healthy state. Why? Instead of new films out of 247 making a profit, 29 had made a profit. A better average than the U.S.'s one out of six, says the APC, ignoring the fact that in the U.S. the "net out of five" takes \$100 million to \$200 million and pays for the other nine films a hundred times over. Whereas Australia's most successful film *Mad Max* has only recouped its equity (except 40 times) and no others out of that 247 have exceeded three to four times recoupment.

Now what does the future hold? Clearly, nobody has a crystal ball, but the following is my scenario, or at least possible scenarios, for the Australian film industry during the next 24 months or so:

1. a vastly reduced production output as private investment rejects the new incentives as insufficiently attractive,
2. what production there is — say six to 10 films a year in the next two years — will, through the APC's involvement and the topping up of the budget process, become even more indigestible to content and no more commercial in their details. The APC's track record of investment in film is so bleak, and probably worse, than the industry's average,
3. the industry will revert back to a cottage industry, causing irreparable damage to the lifestyles of those technicians and other individuals who have made long-term financial career commitments based on continuous employment in the film industry. Similarly, those small to medium-sized companies that have gained up, based on a certain level of production, will now come under massive financial pressure and the three or four production companies aspiring to semi-commercial production activity will have to completely scale down,
4. at the end of this two-year period, unless there is a change in federal government, and perhaps even if there is (as I foresee, having seen the incentives cut back, will not only allow any government to reinstate them at a lower level, I believe this Government will either further reduce the incentives to 100 per cent write-off, with additional, increased APC funding, or, alternatively, it may eliminate any write-off, coloring film investment once again as a capital loss with

a total revenue to direct government funding, which is clearly more in accord with Labor Party policy, and

1. either of those solutions will mean that the goal of those who wish to create a small-scale, steady-state film industry will have been achieved. Although, in my view, they may be surprised to find that most of our beginnings have already been discovered.

That is the likely future. But perhaps I can suggest an alternative, complete restructuring of the film industry incorporating the following:

1. the abolition of the APC with any responsibility for limited funding of cultural projects for cinema by the private Creative Development Fund being handed over to the Australia Council or some similar organization, saving \$6 million a year;
2. the abolition of the certification division of the Department of Home Affairs;
3. all investment in films to attain 100 per cent write off, provided only that the management and control of the production company is Australian and that a certain percentage of the labor cost be expended on Australian residents and nationals; and
4. film investment and film write off remain eligible for all other incentives generally available to Australian export industries (for example, the export incentive).

This scenario would allow the film industry to operate on the rules of the investment marketplace, i.e., a reasonable expectation of profit. Investors and their advisors would be free to make bona fide commercial assessments of projects available in the marketplace, without the direct or indirect interference of the APC or the Department of Home Affairs.

Should the government decide to recognize specifically the speculative, high-risk nature of film investment, which it might well choose to do, any special incentives should be geared to film income, i.e., some concessionary or extension of the currently exempt film income provisions, a results-based incentive.

Agreement also to the above have been responsible for the recent, rapid resurgence of the British industry, both from the perspective of viable commercial production — e.g., *Gandhi* or *Chariot of Fire* — and in a worldwide production facility — e.g., *Sopranos*, the *Real House of Mads*, etc. This is the alternative way to proceed.

4. Skyways has defended his and the APC's role in the mismanagement of 238 per cent to 113 per cent. Skyways has said that the Government was suffering on a nationalistic trade per cent and that he and others thought it was the solution to a problem. He then says the final 133 per cent was a considerable victory. — Ed.

# Phillip Adams

Tonight's debate has been rising in the Australian film industry since 1906: the international versus the national. When the historic film *Mad Jack* was being shot at about that time, another Australian pioneer filmmaker was filming *Against the Wind*. So those two strands have been, arguing and fighting south and east ever since.

I am going to talk unashamedly as opposed to equatedly, as to be sure give you a few images which seem, to me, to be what the Australian film industry is all about.

Tony Clement has talked about the international scene. Frankly, I don't give a damn about the industry elsewhere. The cinema was a film industry in Britain because Australia needs one. One of my first films was a film called *Hearts and Minds*, a documentary on Vietnam with Bruce Pecky. Bruce was, and is, a genius. He wrote and drew a cartoon, which has always haunted me. It showed a bit of a scene, and strong in front of a war, a little, massive Australian figure, wearing a hat, in a. On the scene was the following words: "Have your enemies lived for you tonight by American experts." And that was the way it was!

I grew up on a diet of American pop art: Captain Marvel, Superman, Batman and Robin, John Wayne. In 1958, I remember those treasured in a May Day march. I wasn't a member of my union but they couldn't get my name in much because it was the name of McCarthyism. We found ourselves an old, broken-down hertz, and a very thin actor called Ron Purcell, who was wonderfully ridiculous. We walked around the streets of Melbourne, behind the wheel of a car and in front of the Premier and Doctors, with Ron telling the kids and calling out, "Australian television is destroying Australian talent." And I remind you that at the time there was no Australian control on Australian television at all. In fact, the actors' union (radio) 'unions' such as "When a Girl Marries" had been knocked on the head. As we walked around the streets of Melbourne people called out, "Australian haven't got any talent!"

This was a time when a fellow called Lee Gordon would book the Festival Hall in Melbourne, put on "Gala-bears" and "new wares" from the U.S., and audiences packed onto the stages.

I grew up in a world where we never heard the Australian accent from a radio, you certainly never heard it from a film soundtrack. The only time you heard the Australian accent was if a footballer at a jersey were being

interviewed. The news readers on the ABC had a mock-BBC accent, disc jockeys used a mock-Los Angeles accent. That did not seem to be healthy. From a flawed cultural inferiority, a flowering (lookback) sense of inferiority. I think it was A.D. Hiege who coined the phrase the "cultural cringe". It was very much a part of our lives, many of you may be too young to remember, but it was very real then.

I set danger if we take Tony's line and become an international industry, and by "international" Tony unconsciously means an American industry, make no mistake about it. His argument is that the U.S. is the film industry and to play into that international dynamic means you make films for the U.S., or films which Americans will accept.

A couple of years ago, Kirk Douglas arrived in Australia to star, telephonically, in *The Man from Snowy River*, and I got a phone call asking me to come to the Hilton Hotel in Melbourne to discuss the project with Kirk Douglas. I thought it was rather bizarre, because the Hilton was both as the corner where I used to tell my papers for five years a dozen. I was posted at the door of the Douglas' hotel side by a very charming Belgian woman in her sixties, his wife. I was immediately impressed because I thought he would be on to his thousandth barbie by then!

I must say here that I am not anti-Douglas. He has been an extraordinary man and a very brave filmmaker. He broke the monopoly on the Hollywood Ten, by hiring Dalton Trumbo, he also gave Stanley Kubrick his break, and it was really his idea to get Milla Farrow to do *The Five Days of the Cuckoo's Nest*, and his wife's I had every reason to respect the man.

So, I am opposite the most famous office in Hollywood (with the possible exception of Louis Lomax) and ended into that enormous duplex, to be said, "I've got a great idea for a movie, Phil." I asked, "What is it, Kirk?" He said, "I want you to read the script by a very clever young Californian writer." I said, "Well, look, they come by the track and there is a river full of them at the office. Would you just tell me what it is all about?" He again stated that I read the script, to which I replied, "Look, I am a good listener, you are a great actor. Tell me the idea!" So he went into "our code" and said, "It's 1640 and I arrive in Perth. I see a cowboy out here to shoot kangaroos. After shooting 1000 for a while they want me to shoot... I think you'd like them

About!" "Yes Kirk, About", I said. So he continued, "I'm shooting roos and About and then I get a change of heart!" I asked, "About the roos at the About, Kirk?" And he said, "About the About, Phil." He could not be losing me, so he stepped through the plot a bit and went on. "So I conceive a revolution of About." I can just imagine how my black, radical friends are going to fit that! A cowboy appearing a revolution of About! So he steps to the end. "The end is just the end!" he said. "There is a big, bald old across the Perimeter screen, and I come over the top riding old in the saddle. Behind me are 30,000 About!" I had to interrupt. "I think," I said, "the Abouts are some people, I think you've got them mixed up with Judo or Agatha." He said, "Don't tell me about movies, Phil." And I said, "Don't tell me about About, Kirk."

This was the end of that encounter, but it is not the end of that encounter in some of the threat to the industry. We needed a film industry because, as Bruce Pecky said, our emotions were being lived for us by American experts, I grew up in the world where we never saw an Australian on television or on the cinema screen, all we saw was imported. We had been fighting British wars for generations and now a war of the way with L.J.J. There was simply no energy to give ourselves a new direction. David Williamson and I have often discussed this and we feel that had we lived in Germany we probably would not be as going to about nationalism because the Germans seem to have said it rather boldly on more than one occasion. To live in a country that had taken a punishment like ours — which felt so "off-Broadway" — was really quite depressing.

The impetus for the film industry did not come out of an industry push at all. We did not have an industry. We had a few people making documentaries, we had television commercial and that was about it. I bought a clockwork Italian camera, and I made a feature film. I took \$6000 and six years to do it working at weekends with Bruce Robinson, who now runs the television film school, the best in Australia. At the end it wasn't bad, parts of it were in focus. There was no sync in the sound, it was, literally, distorted together. We didn't have an editing bench, as anything like it was

2. *Jack and Jill* a Poster (1970). Producer, director, scriptwriter: Phillip Adams, Bruce Robinson



Two images from Phillip Adams and Bruce Robinson's *Jack and Jill* a Poster, shot on a clockwork Bolex.

1. *Hearts and Minds* (1968). Director, photographer, editor: Bruce Pecky. Producer: Phillip Adams.



# CINEMA *Papers* PTY. LTD.

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Dear Subscriber,

Thank you for your patience in awaiting this next, special double issue of Cinema Papers.

As you are aware, the magazine went through a difficult financial period last year, resulting in the cessation of publication. An account of the resolution of those financial problems and of the revival of Cinema Papers is inside this issue (see "A Personal History of Cinema Papers"); the net result was the formation of MTV Publishing Limited, a public company limited by guarantee, which is now the publisher of the magazine.

One condition of the sale of the magazine by Cinema Papers Pty Ltd to MTV Publishing Limited was that MTV Publishing take over the subscription liability. This was agreed, and all subscribers to Cinema Papers will have their subscriptions met by MTV Publishing. Part of this agreement was that this double issue (No. 44-45) count as two issues.

The directors and staff of Cinema Papers Pty Ltd would like to thank here all those subscribers who wrote to the Australian Film Commission and others expressing their regard for the magazine and arguing for its continued support. That support is now assured under a new arrangement with the Australian Film Commission and Film Victoria. The future for the magazine is bright.

Yours sincerely,



Scott Murray  
Managing Editor



*The Adventures of Barry McKenzie: "The film for which I still have an appetite 35 years later" (McKenzie)*

issue myself: it was an award in Perth, two awards at the Adelaide Festival and it was the first Australian Film Awards feature prize.

I couldn't get it released, so one would touch it with a huge pole. But I knew there was no great intrigue about making a film. You pour a camera, shots come out and you stick them together. It's not that hard. It suddenly seemed to me that Australians, perhaps, could make them.

At about the same time (in Tony we remember because he was involved in the culture then) there was a lot of filmmaking around Carlton and Melbourne. Melbourne had the biggest film festival in the world, in terms of ticket sales. We also had the biggest film society movement and a very good film critic, a fellow called Colin Barnett (*The Age*), who later became unfairly dirty, but who was then quite good. Quiet show personality (and now Minister for Science and Technology) Barry Jones had a talk-back radio program—the first in Australia—and also had a late-night television program, *Keweenaw*, which was a sort of sub-Parkinson production. This was about the time when the Prime Minister, Harold Holt, was drowned. So there was movement at the time to see who was going to be the new Prime Minister.

The horse metaphor is correct, because all the thoroughbreds were being assessed at the Melbourne Club, which is where our Prime Ministers are traditionally chosen. But Barry tipped an outsider, John Gorton. He had Gorton on the talk-back radio program and on the television show, and the media mania from those interviews got Gorton's popularity going. Suddenly, Gorton was Prime Minister. And he believed Barry Jones to be his lucky rabbit's foot.

Barry had Gorton's ear and I had Barry's ear, and we used the link to come off. We started arguing that we needed a film industry. But before his disappointment, Holt had actually prepared a list of people to revive him on film. The list was given to Gorton and he asked who Holt would have chosen. When Gorton crossed all those candidates off, my name survived. So that was the mechanism.

We wrote Gorton's speeches and we started copying him in such a way as "You don't want to be like Harold Holt and go for all those posh arts, all the opera, etc. Mewen, most that's the go." We talked about the John Gorton Film School and the Gorton Awards and all that sort of stuff. It is funny, because

later on you had to change your topknot. With Bill McMahon you yelled and with Gough Whitlam it was "Only you are a Renaissance man. Only you are a Medici." "Quite right, Phil!"

Then, original impetus for a film industry came largely out of the Melbourne film culture. It was, in Tony's terms, pretty seamy. It was not concerned at all with making money, and it was just terribly concerned with the rest of the world. We just felt it might be a nice idea to make films with our own voices, and our own landscapes, to dream our own dreams.

I wrote a gasp report to Gorton and it started off with a bit of interesting phrasings: "We hold these truths to be self-evident" were the first words. It then went on to say it was about time that we heard our own voices, etc. The report never even went to Cabinet. Gorton just pushed it through.

That was a letter we heard from André Melrose who was for a while De Gaulle's Minister for the Arts. Melrose said, "The trick is to make the Prime Minister the Minister for Film. Then you get the money out of the Treasury and the Minister is too busy to interfere." Wherem, if you get junior ministers, in we have often found to our cost, they don't get the money and they interfere all the time. So our trick, right from day one, was to have Gorton, Whitlam, Wren, Duncan and the rest of them as Ministers for Film.

My report recommended three things: an Experimental Film Fund, a film school and an Australian Film Development Corporation (AFDC). We had to start from scratch. There was nothing established to build on. We were opposed by the Packer, by the ABC, and by Graeme Ussan and Hoyts Theatres. None of these interest groups wanted an Australian industry. It was a pen in the neck. They thought it took and naïve, but we got it through.

The idea was that the Experimental Film Fund gave money to anyone who had an idea. Anything was experimental. A film on a young eye doctor or a lawyer's wife was experimental in Australia on those days. It didn't matter; a film was experimental. From that exercise you would select some of the brighter kids and send them to film school. Out of that school would come producers, directors and writers, who would then be funded by the AFDC and go on to greater things.

In the interim, however, Gorton was deposed—self-annihilated in whatever—and suddenly we had a problem with a man called Peter

Hewson. Hewson tried to stamp everything, but a war was lost—though he did succeed in stopping the film school.

I was on the Australian Film and Television School's interim council, so I decided I would return on *This Day Tonight*, which I did, very noisily. The next morning I received a phone message that the Prime Minister would call me in half an hour. Another call: "The Prime Minister would call in 30 minutes" then "10 minutes" and, by then, I was getting a bit nervous. Finally, I picked the phone up and a little voice said, "Hello Phil!" It was Prime Minister McMahon. He had never met him, nor had I seen his wife (and that is important because of the punch line). He said he quite understood how gross I was and he presented a film school. Not just any film school, but the best film school, and some much in fees!

One of the Experimental Film Fund came people of the caliber of Peter War, and a lot of the early films such as *Shank*, a major success made in *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie*—the film for which I still have to apologize 15 years later! So much was sponsored by the Experimental Film Fund. The middle kick—the film school—was nothing, of course, and Whitlam came along and put it in place.

I make an apology for the fact that we have a national industry. I make no apology for it being a nationalized industry. I say it constantly: we live by whom of government. I believe that if the rug were pulled, the only film to survive in that free market would be horrific films and porn. There is very little evidence to suggest that we have any of that.

I also make an apology for the fact that the film industry will stay nationalized. Whether the government does it through taxation incentives or through direct grants is almost irrelevant. All art is nationalized. If we had the free market applying in Australia, you could close the art galleries, you could close the opera, the ballet, the theatre, the lot. It is all nationalized. You either want it or you don't. If you want it, you have to pay for it.

However, a lot of things Tony says about the track record of the Australian Film Commission (AFC) are correct. I received a letter the other day from a disgruntled AFC commissioner who gave me a list of the films that the AFC had said "yes" to and it was a who's who of the films that it should have backed.

The picture problem is evidently hard. It is one thing to distribute films that lack quality, lack originality, but it is very hard to know what is going to win. Even when *Star Wars* was released, 20th Century-Fox didn't really know what it was. For almost four it never released, and one of the studio executives' life was it and it died.

The world is full of stories like that, about films that were the great games of Hollywood passed on. If they were so clever as all that, they would be making more successes themselves. So I think the film industry will remain nationalized. I never promised Gorton anything else. My original report to Gorton emphasized that subsidies would be a permanent arrangement.

On the other hand, I am not against international films. I don't for a moment want to keep making our own and ignoring the world. On the same day that I got my Kuala Lumpur job commission as AFC chairman from the Governor General, all left had broken loose over Robert Corneil's documentary-drama for the ABC, *Scenes of Justice*. At a press conference after my appointment I said that

1. *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (1972). Directed: Stuart Bedford. Producer: Philip Adams.

while at the APEC I hoped we would make just as many things as make people just as angry. There is one thing about Australian films which has bored me of late: their tendency to flatter our ethics, the tendency to say nice things about Australia. I hope we will make more confronting films, a great many more films which reflect our regional realities, more films like Peter Weir's *The Year of Living Dangerously* or John Duigan's *Fast Forward*. I hope to see more films that admit the fact that we are the second most multi-cultural nation on earth after Israel.

In my view, our natural market is not the U.S. but Europe. Tony would say that is because we make hard, defiant, intellectual films for bored university graduates. I suppose it is because we make films far grown up. The Australian industry has tended to make films for people under the 25 years-old (that is because we are so old and grumpy). We have not made any films at all for the young target group.)

I disagree, with whatever connoisseurs, the tendency to buckle the past 10 or 15 years of Australian filmmaking. We are regarded as a great filmmaking country. Today Tony showed me American reviews of *Louise Heath*, the film I did last year with Fred Guey. Andrew Semm of *Movie* wrote, one of the toughest critics in America, and that *Louise Heath* was the latest evidence of what he described as "the continuing miracle of Australian film." I think it has been a miracle. There have been some dreadful films, but there have been some marvellous ones as well.

How does one judge "international success"? I made *Louise Heath* with Cox because no one would touch him with a barge pole in a so-called free market. Cox had made a couple of very low-budget films, one called *Keanu* which, perhaps, one or two of you might have seen. I thought *Keanu* was characteristically Australian in one weird respect: I knew his problem. When we made *The Adventurers* of Barry McKinnel, the first film made with government money in the old AFPC days, I took it to the major theatre chains — Hoyts and Greater Union Theatres — whose strategy to me and to Australian film was total. They told me to stick it.

I then noticed that *Keanu's* *Playground* had been running for over a two cinema — one in Melbourne and one in Sydney — for no good reason. No one was going. The only reason they

were running it was because they could not get a replacement. The sloppily was blocking film supply. So we put *Barry McKinnel* on and the rest is history. It went on to be a huge success. *Keanu* couldn't get out, any more than *The Devil's Playground* could get out. When Fred Schepers made *The Devil's Playground*, he only got it released because I let him have my cinema, withdrawing *Don's Party* for him. *Louise Heath*, which won the Australian Film Award (in 1982) as the best film in a field of 37, could not get a local release. So the Australian film scene, after all, is not quite as nice as people might make out.

*Don's Party* was, to say the least, ethnic. I never thought it would travel beyond Melbourne and Sydney. Indeed, it didn't go well in Adelaide, and they burned it in Brisbane. However, it was a smash in Tel Aviv and in West Berlin, and it was one of the top 10 films of the year in Vancouver (where, I have always thought, they probably confused it with *Don Quixote*).

Tony and I both had film open in New York a couple of weeks ago. Tony's was *Turkey Shoot*, which is not an anti-filmic protest. It is the pornography of violence and probably the most violent film I have ever seen. I was so moved by it as the Australian Film Awards ceremony that I bunkered out of the theatre and went down to the bar. That episode made the front page story in the Melbourne *Tribune*. "Adams walks out on *Louise Heath*," it said. The film's publicity people then used that as a ploy to get other people to go and see it.

*Louise Heath* is now playing in four New York cinemas and is becoming the cultural frontier being crossed to the other "thinking capitals", such as Boston and San Francisco. By contrast, *Turkey Shoot* opened disastrously in about 8000 cinemas. I am delighted that Tony makes these sorts of films, but can't we make more, too? There is room for us all. It is rather important that when our Prime Minister goes to the White House, the "first lady" of the U.S., Nancy Reagan, says that Bryan Brown is her favorite actor (having replaced Gene Ackroyd). That is an enormous cultural achievement.

Tonight, Australian films are probably screening in about 50 or 55 countries. Almost everywhere, the films talked about are the films that Tony chooses. The films that might

5. The film was distributed by producer John B. Murray and exhibited by Hoyts in Melbourne and Greater Union Theatres in Sydney. Murray says both Hoyts and Rankinbow refused to distribute the film.



"I hope we will make more confronting films, which admit to our regional realities, more films like *For Fear* (below)." For Fear (below)

make the money are Tony's "mad-Pacific films", as I will show. A just famous script Tony's model. To me, the English film industry died when it accepted his postulate. The British film industry was pretty good. You might remember the Ealing comedy days. Sir Michael Balcon, Alexander Korda and others. It was, once, a great industry. Then they decided to go the American route and to make "ish-African films".

For 10 or 15 years the British technicians were working, making the *Sagittarius* and *James Bond* films. They were doing the technical work for a lot of the big Hollywood blockbusters, but no British film was seen on the screen. There was no sense of British identity. Now, with David Pattinson following our technique and our tactics, the British are making films like *Chances of Fire* and *Gandhi*. David has learnt a lot from our industry and he and his colleagues have given Britain an industry again.

If Americans not only have their cameras lived for them by American experts, but also start becoming vanguardists daily for those Americans, what the hell have we achieved? It is tantamount to asking Sidney Nolan to repainting Ned Kelly and start doing *Teetons*. Tony is right about the U.S. being the centre of the film industry, but it is also probably the centre of the coast, the U.S. is probably the centre of the art. Do we tell all our artists in Australia to start doing American stuff? The idea would be abhorrent.

Tony's critiques are provocative. I have often regretted that he is not in the mainstream. If he had been producing Peter Weir or Bruce Beresford, it would have been terrific for *For Fear* and *Brace*.

Another thing that has to be said about "internationalism." I don't think an Australian film is defined as Australian by where it is shot. It is defined by its attitude to its material. For example, I don't think it would be out of character to film an Australian version of a Shakespearean work. I wholeheartedly agree that we should not be narcissistic and narrow, that we should take a global view. But I will not say, as you would I want to be a part of, a film industry which only made "mad-Pacific films" for all those rich Americans. Let us have a rich, diverse school of filmmaking. We put into the industry far too much: to give ourselves a national voice, to give ourselves a sense of national purpose and a national identity, and to throw that away would be a disaster and a shame. \*



*Louise Heath* the latest evidence of "the continuing miracle of Australian film" (Andrew Semm).

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# Film Reviews

## Man of Flowers

Helis Grossman

**Man of Flowers** was the most unusual picture of 1961. An art film, that on a technical level might not have been particularly innovative (the spirit of the film lies in its desire to appear to move more slowly than it is, in a purely technical sense), it seems to challenge the mind when it actually only reflects a confused (and, in a sense, a complex) vision of beautiful photographs, disparate characters, and quirky behavior that makes a simple story. **Man of Flowers** is a charming director film, which one believes can be seen as a highly successful and provocative film when one has seen it and can't stop thinking about it and about its content. This is not to say that the film is facile or that it has a confused audience without making any demands on them.

Charles Weaver (Norman Krasa) is an intriguing character. In a picture presented as an almost comic fable, as in its subtitle, small man who comes pleasure from watching an artist's model, Lisa (Myrna Loy), in a moment in his living room, then watches her in a church across the street to play the organ (which is intended, surely). Gradually, however, as the film progresses, Charles becomes less and less a benevolent figure of fun.

Even in a delicate performance designed to create a more aware and critical version of Peter Taylor's *Chaucer's Garden* (a Hal Ashby's *Being There*, 1971), with a touch of Peter Hoptman's *Don Quixote* (Agostino Neri's 1984). Both *Chaucer* and *Charles* come into contact with the last stages of their lives and move in a world of their own which makes people to change as it becomes more of the case of *Chaucer* or *Charles* in the case of *Chaucer*. Both are capable of social expression, although women do often feel concerned out of them. They make a mixture of retarded stony and painful wisdom which proves a magnet for other people who find them strange. *Chaucer* and *Charles* in their work. And, eventually, both *Chaucer* and *Charles* come to recognize the people who are responsible to manipulate them, by understanding *Chaucer* and *Charles* that they want to use them because they have become victims of their own limitations.

Krasa's portrayal of twisted, lonely, disheveled, and delicate away is a perfect one of the dramatic (blackish) segments. Paul Giamatti is small. *Charles* boyhood was quiet, slow, and more of a sense of a person, these scenes are a powerful depiction of a misunderstood childhood.

The need for and fascination with women and their by the film *Charles* is exposed to a stark, unadorned



Lisa (Myrna Loy) as artist's model, sits for her lover, Charles (Norman Krasa). Paul Giamatti as *Man of Flowers*.

artist (Peter Warner, Henry) and even for a moment, if only for a moment, as a substitute (and man who comes pleasure from watching an artist's model, Lisa (Myrna Loy), in a moment in his living room, then watches her in a church across the street to play the organ (which is intended, surely). Gradually, however, as the film progresses, Charles becomes less and less a benevolent figure of fun. Even in a delicate performance designed to create a more aware and critical version of Peter Taylor's *Chaucer's Garden* (a Hal Ashby's *Being There*, 1971), with a touch of Peter Hoptman's *Don Quixote* (Agostino Neri's 1984). Both *Chaucer* and *Charles* come into contact with the last stages of their lives and move in a world of their own which makes people to change as it becomes more of the case of *Chaucer* or *Charles* in the case of *Chaucer*. Both are capable of social expression, although women do often feel concerned out of them. They make a mixture of retarded stony and painful wisdom which proves a magnet for other people who find them strange. *Chaucer* and *Charles* in their work. And, eventually, both *Chaucer* and *Charles* come to recognize the people who are responsible to manipulate them, by understanding *Chaucer* and *Charles* that they want to use them because they have become victims of their own limitations.

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represent the architect to the film-maker's point of view, begs the question by the wisdom and absurdity of the character. Howard plays the comic relief well, but the modern, better equipped with finding a laugh and blow with a healthy, credible counter argument on behalf of the values of modern art.

Similarly, in the exquisitely made relationship between Lisa and Charles, the latter can hardly be taken seriously as a representation of the character, reconsidered male and thereby weaken the reason for Lisa's refusal to a better relationship. Given this, the rather fine portrait of Lisa by Sarah Walker can only be forgiven for regarding Lisa's attitude as a passing whim.

It is for that reason that I agree with Melpina Mora that *Man of Flowers* is a film about roles and not about roles. The film is not about roles, it is about roles.

*Man of Flowers* (1961) (1961)





arrivals usually of P.S. to Vanessa, P.S. again makes his brother clear and he begins reflecting against her, using sarcasm, defiance and overt displays of his desire to be with Lila and George.

During a birthday party, an impending storm forces the children into the house, the magnificent tables of food which have been set up on the lawn blowing about in the wind as the stormers finally try to convert them. This apocalyptic Vanessa's attempt to establish an order where to what the natural forces of chance seem would destroy.

Finally, Vanessa witnesses with horror a mauling beating occurring where P.S. has allowed children walking about checking cushions and chairs, etc. "Hold me tighter", is mock imitation of what P.S. has seen Vanessa do. Vanessa decides to let P.S. go back to Lila and George, parting with the advice, "Hold on who you are, P.S., so you can know how to live someone else."

After Vanessa's accidental death in a fire, which is created by a rather ambiguous model of a fire, P.S. recalls her message to "find out who you are" and attempts from Lila's perspective, in particular with Lila's self assertion to help him to decide to grow up. He asks Lila what his real father is with ambiguous and apparent to her George, who clearly wishes to see his brother. Her triumphant return about the justice of the message shouting, "I'm still, the hell" making the complete story clear to his father to maturity.

The dramatic portrait of Vanessa is important to the film, for while it is a dramatic strength in itself, it reflects some major weaknesses.

Although Vanessa brings the lives of P.S., George and Lila, she is not shown as a Williams figure of deliberate malice. Insights into her character reveal a tenderhearted woman of confusion and contradiction, with external wealth, material security and luxury mask her internal confusion and emotional isolation. Her past love affairs with Logan, someone her father P.S. is to tell the audience not to believe, put her desire for emotional order is undermined by her sorrowing persistence. And her advice to P.S. to "find out who you are" is an indication of failure in her quest for emotional fulfillment. P.S.'s desperate reaction to her death and his vision of her near the film's end indicate that she has had considerable emotional impact for him and the viewers.

But while Vanessa is the most dramatically involving character in the film next to P.S., Lila and George, in contrast, are not even a comparable amount of involvement. The scene in which they finally try to stop Logan leaving as a train is a strong moment of their commitment to and love for P.S. There is at least a sense through the two brief moments of George (thanks to an excellent performance by Whitfield) as a hard-working, honest man. However, their characters, especially that of George, are given too little breathing in the film, and their bond with P.S. is not shown to be suffering greatly from the strain of Vanessa's growing social status and influence over him.

This inadequacy is best exemplified by Lila's closing scenes after Vanessa now has P.S. for five days a week. "Because we couldn't fight his disease and we could afford a private school" The relevance that would



Phar Lap (Stewart Wilson) was his first race at the 1926 Derby at Randwick. Stuart Wilson's Phar Lap.

accompany such a dramatic, and the impending change that the potential early French values of the private school would bring to their lives, is not captured in any way other than this formality. George's political involvement and Lila's interest are aspects of their character that are not sufficiently developed. Early on, Lila wishes briefly she does not appear to suffer from the chronic alcoholic condition and is much later in the film, in the dramatic courtroom scene.

Likewise, George's political work, apart from receiving one slight mention, when characterizing Vanessa for a new suit ("I'll really be flattered to see you in that"), does not feature and the court scene, his subsequent refusal upon discovering that he "proceeds back" is reduced to an admission of the scene he must, but lacks the power that a build-up would give him.

Kennedy's gracefulness in the film also reflects a consistent creative socio-cultural imbalance between the period of the London society, from which the leads, and the world-of-pizza environment of Lila and George, which the designer visually, the price is made by contrasting the spacious, elegant chambers of Vanessa's mansion with the claustrophobic urban heat of George and Lila.

Too much of the film is set around Vanessa's spiritual life and, while the viewer gets a good impression of the values and lifestyle of the British aristocracy, there is so much lost at how Lila and George live and manage to cope. Such a criticism may conflict with the notion of nostalgia, but a realistic audience costs when the efforts of the Depression are only mentioned superficially rather than being shown in a convincing manner.

A particularly welcome aspect of the film is the handling of P.S.'s character. The superb performance of Campbell and the obvious understanding of his exposure, growth and development of moral wisdom is a welcome response to the recent spate of films where the characters, who would be under-16-year-olds,

Through *Careful, He Might Hear You* has been somewhat overrated, and could have benefited from several better-developed and sustained indigenous period features, it is a pleasing and spotaneously moving, if undemanding, production. Its low production values (it straggles and the strong performance in the central scene, especially that of Whistler as Vanessa, still speaking from the screen), there are several inadequacies, but the film has the right space more than that it misses and that, after all, is what counts.

**Careful, He Might Hear You** Directed by Carl Schultz. Producer: Bill Rank. Screenplay: Michael Jenkins. Director of photography: John Segré. Edited: Richard Brown. Sound: Producer: George Rodgley. Music: Peter Cook. Sound mixing: Jeff Beaumont. Cast: Shirley Harper (Vanessa), Robert Howe (Lila), Herbert Chittell (P.S.), John Grayson (George), Shoshana Tauer (Lila), Isabelle Anderson (Auntie), Peter Whistler (George), Colleen Coughlin (Lila), Pauline Langston (Auntie). Released: December 1985. 15 min. 126 min. Australia 1985.

## Phar Lap

### Kirk Connolly

Because of its striking and by now familiar Mayday build-up, I must confess to approaching *Phar Lap* with some reservations. The first warning (courtesy of the Australian Film Awards) was to please not to suggest that I intended a mere reversion, and a further plain warning, to avoid my almost-inevitable favorable statistics. There was no doubt about it: director Stuart Wilson had turned out a largely authentic, emotionally sustained and thoughtfully promising mainstream film within the parameters of popular

legend concerning, by comparison, The Man From Snowy River is simply a tribute from Melbourne country.

Of course, *Phar Lap* is a painstakingly replete portrait for the "Crown Asset" subject of modest personality (see Bradman, Jacky Deary and various of Stanley and Ned Kelly for his blood). But Wilson and his writers David Williamson must have been usually aware of the dangers inherent in the way repeated and much-repeated would choke a just in study as would a cavalier attitude to be in historical fact.

In the end, they strike a nicely-accurate balance. The movie *Phar Lap* is somewhat longer than life, and so was the real life hero. The period shot like on a fairly routine gema, yet for those (especially those who are both convinced for many aspects by this extraordinary animal.

It is great stuff, but acceptable, nevertheless, thanks to a skillful counterpointing of *Phar Lap*'s famous exploits with the plucky, straight and falset of the very horses around him. There is a little real always, beyond the agency of Asia's Lila's, costume and a general authenticity of locale, to capture the skewed atmosphere of those post-patched times.

However, it should be noted that Wilson and Williamson capture deftly along a course shows with superbly compressed, making the story, but not too much, of an incident ended four years. Certainly Williamson has to reveal very little, the artistic manipulation and superb grasp of Australian show horse history (including also the better objectives presumably dated like the only speak of the subject) apply the necessary emotional moments and add human touches of primary events and emotional context.

These points, as well-written as anything Williamson has done for the screen, show Wilson is making a convincing relationship between horse and human, notably master Tommy Woodcock (from *Badman's*), master Harry Telford (John Vaughan) and







Frank Sapp, senior CIA officer, Saigon, 1969-1973. (Source: William Whitson's *Allen*)

Dunn (but not how the agency helped bring Dunn down). Private talks of the agency team "later had overviews. The Philippine government" brings out a handful of cases at Indonesia in 1970. One also claims that American left-right teams were standing by to support the insurgents.

Vietnam: CIA operative Ralph McGeehan was with the "coupsters" of an influential book, funded by the agency to cover its tracks in the Indo-China crisis of 1961. McGeehan and other highly placed agency men, Victor Marchetti and Francis X. Clancy, discuss the agency's role in Vietnam from the time the U.S. began to sponsor Dunn in 1954.

McGeehan says that before this decision was taken, the American people and allies such as Australia, were told a picture of the situation to Vietnam that was "very gloomy".

Marchetti — author of a controversial and uncorroborated account of CIA workings and murders, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* — and Clancy, the CIA's chief strategy analyst in Saigon in 1975, are easygoing and a few startling, albeit about America's dealings with Cambodia.

The next morning in Marchetti's guided reference to "Cambodia" the word CIA activity in Australia during the time of the Whitson Government. He describes how another CIA man complained to him that a "hypocrite" (Duke, Marchetti's word) indulgent opposition to Free Day was being indulged by another disclosure activity "of an internal nature in Australia" goes on to offer

the suspicion of the CIA action that in Canberra.

Sapp, daily-headlines and still youthful-looking, describes how he reluctantly joined the Australian government (through its ambassador in Saigon) about the use and nature of the North Vietnamese invasion into South Vietnam. Later, he says, he was convinced to support the Whitson Government as "North Vietnamese collaborator" after a demand about American warplane bombing of the North.

Almost without exception, the Americans who appear in *Allen* are aware of their role and attitudes that the Americans. Only Clive Cameron, with his charge that Australian intelligence was behind the CIA in Chile during the Allende Government, makes any notable contribution.

Cameron alleges that, as Minister for Immigration in the Whitson Government, he was "integrated" to discover that there were "31 or 24 ASIO agents around the world posing as some police of friends".

When I discovered the role Australia Intelligence had played in the overthrow of the Allende Government in Chile in 1973, I was appalled that any one department was involved in this sort of work. The intelligence system in Chile were seen as a "hyphen" between the CIA, while [and women's] side is exposed in Chile in that time, and the President [and which] eventually murdered the democratically-elected president. Imagine my amazement.

# film reviews

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when I received a letter from the Prime Minister saying that I was to take as British subject in the quarter that I was not to withdraw ANSO rights even from Santiago and that nothing was to be done about it at all.

Other Australian witnesses include David Cobbe (whose photo-tipped version of the film led to that extraordinary Rapid Communication referendum) talking about the Australian Labor Party's victory "that influenced me as it" by allegiance by Christopher Boyce of disengagement by the CIA in Australian politics, and academic Dr. Desmond Ball on the importance to the U.S. — and potential danger to Australia — of the East Gap, South-West Cape and Northern Transitions. The U.S. is by now quite important at the front of being, particularly presented by Marshall Cottle, the notable shadowing American Ambassador during the Wilson years, who sternly levels out the camera and delivers:

I thought that if we just said our emotions and deal with the new government on fairly simple, we'll all be all right. And so I went out New day a quiet a bit different from the last history of things.

When William Cottle declares roundly "we have never interfered in Australia's past," witnesses ending partly contradictory take a little later on, when Justice Marchant declares the CIA has been involved in police and some programs with friendly governments all over the world why didn't he do it in Australia?

What, then, does Allen achieve? Obviously, anyone who expects it to reveal a consistent line of Australian intervention and manipulation in Australian affairs isn't thinking clearly. Allen's film, Australian have had an like Jacobo Arbenz or Salvador Allende, much like Fidel Castro, to whom the U.S. has said, in the film's title and correct contemporary reports Australians, they are after.

The film's technique is formal, restrained and a good deal more mysterious than appeared before now — the final lack of commentary, and the menhanded men of participants and witnesses — much suggest.

It is also fairly disturbing. There without it, soon it is a picture. Knowledge of world history since 1945, and particularly how well we are in the South East Asian and Pacific regions, may think that a good many of the witness' remarks are an either/or of

irrelevant. All, however, have at least some significance, even if, in a few cases, it is only in what is said.

In the end, one cannot but conclude that Australia's big brother in the U.S. in the middle of a diary by the clapped tongue of bygone years, "My Murmur" (Murray) has indeed been watching over Australia — in its fashion.

**Allen** Directed by Murray Willmott  
**Produced** John La Crosse Co-Produced  
 Allen Pankovitch, Executive Producer  
 David Rice and Carme Sussman  
 Kenneth Maitland Williams William F. Well and Gene Pinsky, Director of photography  
 Philip Hall Editor Jack Russell  
 Music John Russell and Gene Pinsky  
 Production Company Grand Bay Productions  
 Camera Equipment Harris Motion Picture  
 1983

## For Love Or Money

Rad Baker

Recently, Germaine Greer made some pertinent comments about the women's movement, believing it to be "regarded by husbands and fathers" and adding: "by many religious observers" to ideology. Her most pertinent comment was the women's movement as "Graham Green" without Graham Green himself as further evidence of a "consumer productive and vulgar" feminist ideology, leaving as a form of political risk.

If Greer appears progressively at odds with a movement she promotes as serious and powerful, the feminist perspective of the compilation documentary *For Love Or Money* is more an sociologically looking the history of Australian women and their role in the politics of war, race and class.

In developing the male political framework, the film appears the action of an isolated feminism, arguing that political issues, while sometimes appearing at first glance as far removed as more women and understanding the quest for equal power with men to determine not only the lives of women but also the lives of others who have, throughout history, been kept powerless.

If the greatest strength of *For Love Or Money* derives from this political perspective, the film's major virtue is the list and topics with which it tackles



Miss J.M. Donovan  
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 Winner in Underwood Pham



Top: a champion (1982) of 1983. Above: mother and children in a Melbourne kitchen of 1955. Major Winifred Margaret Lockie, Margaret Greer and Jane Thornton. For Love Or Money.

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a doctor who manages on his first appearance in the film to demonstrate most of the properties associated with the medical profession. Dressed in white lab coats and a haplessly inflated blood shirt, he demonstrates his talismanic powers with patients and a bemused tolerance of those that Paul finds unrepresentative. When the doctor is revealed as an unrepentant homosexual, the contrast is complete: Paul's exposure to Eve forms a central component of the narrative, deflating its mission that education can transform its patients, and affirming, at the same time, its own (productive) narcissism.

Although a large part of Paul's attraction is defined as Eric's father, the viewer's language is extended beyond the realm of his consciousness. There is a cardinal emphasis on the need for informed consent and education and sexuality is presented as a threat. The inappropriate over-analysis of an employer is an employer who has contracted syphilis, and the issues of a

patient suffering from herpes, are introduced to question about the nature of the disease. The more homogenous slender depicts a general narrative about bodily function and the transmission of infection. In this way the film seems consciously designed as a source of information for its audience, systematically discussing the symptoms of the pill, the treatment for venereal disease and the existence of non-specific variables, an infection that relates some of the symptoms of gonorrhea.

The film also attributes a part of Paul's mental confusion to attitude to his pupils in the clinic. When he is in the clinic he is unable to identify with any of the patients or place them in a broader context which accepts sexual disease as a by-product of other health or falling standards. However, as he watches a couple at the beach, he is forced to acknowledge the existence of an attraction and acknowledges that he has unconsciously dissociated from the patient

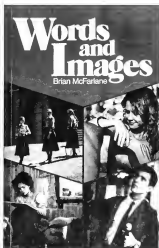
Having accepted the clinic as a necessary, even desirable, establishment, he is able to return and see his work done in a different context. He is even able to consider his private time in Eric's room which especially coincides with the two men sharing a laugh in a toilet cubicle. It is indicative of the material generosity of the script that even the most pompous and egotistical character is granted his moments of empathy.

If *The Clinic* has a fault, it is Eric Lindsay, whose casual yet protocol approach to his work is seen to emanate from a humor and humanity of real benefit to his patients. Lindsay's performance is not simply enjoyable, but almost remarkable in a profession from which such representations are mostly absent, he succeeds in portraying an open and intelligent homosexual as a character worthy of respect.

Lindsay's professional attributes are shared by the other members of the staff. United by a sense of community, they operate efficiently and with con-

science and wit humor through the series of consultations. As a group, their tolerant receptivity becomes an antidote to the psychological disorder of a repressive culture. There are scenes with the variety of patients spilling out from the waiting rooms provides much of the basis for the film's social observations.

However, even the staff is subject to criticism. In a several scenes which takes a well-deserved critique of any feelings of superiority or professional emanating from the safety of the role, Wilson (John McEwan) is introduced. He appears to be a person from the medical profession (John McEwan) who is security exhibited about attending the clinic. To the extent of adopting a dispute and a pseudonym, this being in the toilet rather than he can be seen in the waiting room. His uncharacteristic modesty about sex has resulted in fearful proportions, who combined with her own medical standards of hygiene. His faith, however, compelled to undergo



## OUT NOW

A study of Australian novels into film  
by Brian McFarlane

See Insert, p. 3, for details.



an obstetrician because, for the first time since her husband's departure three years ago, she has seen work in men and was horrified when he failed to get out of bed and walk toward the stairs. Convinced that such a man in addition to his stated malady, indicated that he was somehow undone, she followed a translocator and headed for the clinic. Upon the disclosure of her condition, even the now widely recognized device and more than 100 film clips in response to suppress their work. Within minutes people not around a bunch of technicians and nurses confirmed by video, she could discuss her a closer to film therapy. The topic is important to others who are in the field of the work.

And the rate of the work changes slowly, in a way indicative of the therapy, with which the film can illustrate between comedy and drama. Seeing that she is being rejected to take highly demands that she be treated with respect and acknowledgment that she may have serious stressors that stem from the fact that she is an outcast and, in deciding, is wrong. The immediate effect of her work is to inform the public of the staff and what an apology, which may again stress the need for complete rather than a partial understanding. His support speech produces an effect similar to that of Sandy's intense outbreak in *Twelve*. In both cases an extremely sensitive and sensitive woman can find her demands and replace her confidence demanding that she be viewed more respectfully.

At last a variety of women and a collection of social norms. The *Clinic* is a film program and cannot easily deny that occasionally, a heavy-handed attempt to draw attention to the serious side of the subject detracts from the fluidity of the film. A refusal to ignore the greater aspects of its subjects so as to sustain the highly sensitive. However, the film of the typical person, Warwick (Paul Langer), illustrates more clearly and adequately covered by the script and cinematography the impact of Langer's sensitive personality.

It is established early that Warwick is suffering from epilepsy and that he belongs to the same at his place of employment has resulted in an emotional breakdown of his confidence and his relationship. Despite efforts by the helpful and emotional counselor (Pat Fennell) it is also clear that Warwick will remain a victim, not only of his disease but also of the lack of understanding, discrimination by his employer and family in the light of this information. It becomes necessary to emphasize his plight by conveying some of his feelings and emotions. As one of the film associates when the film shifts on its own treatment of consequences rather than on developing a more subtle depiction of information leading to the same conclusion. It comes on screen and followed closely.

The film's biggest but hardly ending obstacle is a desire to clarify the issue completely. The extent of a relationship, based on throwing into the equation as a variable factor into others by denoting an unusual character in the situation, as in the director for the film's conclusion, as the moment between the building's maintenance and the return to Susan. Eric and Paul involve their differences. Dr. Young recognizes that his situation, a justified person cannot with his

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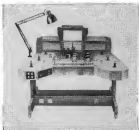
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failure to see and two other patients discover their medical situation in the street. Once the film's characters to create the impression of a possible day at the clinic, the intrusion of a harsh scene seems a little implausible. It is an unnecessary exterior scene at creating a quick indication of violent situation when the intensity of the film suggested they might be better left open ended.

However, in spite of these reservations, *The Clinic* is an admirable value on contemporary values and an

inspiring attempt to highlight the problems of individuals facing a particular form of private strain. For its many sketches it presents a host of related conditions, including Mark Lantz, Evelyn Krupp and Alice Penfield, and the treatment between comedy and drama are generally subtle and brief. But the film's real strength is in its ability to depict situations that often produce embarrassment, discomfort and even because it is a direct which evokes the need for tolerance and compassion.

*The Clinic* Directed by David Brown. Produced by Susan La Tyn, Bob Wray. Screenplay by Greg Walker. Director of Photography by Roger Eddowes. Edited by Michael Blum. Sound recorded by John Smith. Cast: Chris Hayward (Eric Lantz), Susan Burke (Paul Armstrong), Derek Newman (Lantz), Roma Mitchell (Lantz), Susan Lantz (Paul Armstrong). Production company: The Film Project. Copyright: 1983. 90 min. 35 mm. Available 1983.

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# Picture Preview

## Silver City

*A love story set against the epic background of post-World War 2 migration to Australia.*

*Silver City is directed by Sophia Turkiewicz, from a screen play by Turkiewicz and Thomas Keneally, for producer Joan Long. Director of photography is John Seale.*



*Opposite page: clockwise from top left—Nina and Debus join a party in their temporary home — a film poster 'Silver City, the Mission for Immigrants' (M. Colwell/Starline Pictures) presents a scene in 'The 100,000 Immigrants' (Cheryl Walker/Starline Pictures) — Nina comes to the notice of a fellow immigrant*

*Right: Polish immigrants Nina (Natalie Demberczky) and John (Steve Kinn) — before immigrants get their first glimpse of Australia*





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STAND"

"ANNIE'S  
COMING OUT"

1984

7

# From the VAULT

## A Film and Television Cryptic Crossword

Val Ward

### Welcomes to Xanadu: How To Play

This is a cryptic crossword; the "cryptic" involves clues that are similar to those found in weekend newspapers: the clues must be deciphered in various ways to get to their meaning and the solver refers to the word's meaning, playing around with the possibilities and anagrams of language, acronyms and meaning. The grid works just as a normal crossword does: 1a points down and each clue is the number of letters in the word or is asking: If it is more than one word, there will be a number for each word; e.g., Last Year at Marienbad will be 14-4-2-5.

Basically, this is a crossword about film and television. The clues and answers have to do with groups and/or people in film or television or books, titles of films or shows or books, technical matters, poetry, novels and figures, film theory, etc. Over the years, cost has accumulated (and the crossworders' information in this area, the puzzle at a point but also a word system for reaching up into that obscure archive and plucking out just the right bit [just this clue, doesn't it?]).

Type: Initials (like, no, and/or) may not be part of answers which are titles. Some answers are abbreviated. In chess, capital letters may not be allowed; pronunciation may be missing in crossword; the clue may contain more than one sort of pun/double or reference; apparent errors or mispellings may be intentional and part of the answer; play may be made on words with multiple meanings; the solver may be looking for may be in its original language; with reasonable logic, puns may make the presence of a film title in the clue may not always refer

directly to those associated with that film; pronouns should be carefully studied; the clue may be a list relating to the answer — a common director, and clues may combine on members of the answer, or leading to the answer, which when transcribed results in a word.

Much play will be made of grammar and of homonyms, as which can only produce such as "we hear" or "sounds like" may give a word, there may be similar or similar reference to a named person (Clue: Miss John Answer: Day). One may have to assemble the answer for by let (Clue: Capable + star, French will drive what and usual Answer by celebrity) Gaudin + but, plus = rich, dry white and cheap = list; let + rich + list = list sounds like (Reptiles).

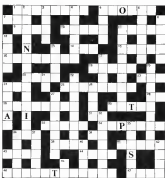
### Example

Clue: Hunter and DeLoe did it without latter (7) Solution by name association: Tim Hunter directed Miss DeLoe's first feature, *The Pharaoh*. Tim Hunter, deceased, had nothing to do with it.

Clue: At the start, home of Russian U.S. film archivist "At the start" suggests that the answer will be initials or acronyms, from there, with a bit of knowledge — one led to Museum of Modern Art, which started one of the first U.S. archives and is located in the East, commonly referred to as NYC as MoMA (the answer).

Sometimes the answer is present in the clue. Clue: Mostly pronounced American answer Answer: MPAA, the U.S. rating board, named by noting the first letter of each word of the clue. One may recognize homonyms or variations in spelling between clue and answer.

Don't expect



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Possible *Avast* version of mascot, harpy, animal, etc.; could mean more problems (6)
- 2 Preserves hot links, now come and and alone (6)
- 3 Fred, whose surname marked a line for railway (5)
- 4 At the start, home of Russian (7, 8, 9) film archivist (4)
- 5 Dark is awkward, but loves lines (2)
- 6 Power passing through the plot (5)
- 7 One who chase eight (4)
- 8 Old light-right for fast on (1)
- 9 Takes all kinds of money to make their picture (8)
- 10 Search better since (2)
- 11 Something worse so long in New York (4)
- 12 Silent puzzle (1)
- 13 To Billy Joe (5)
- 14 Sounds like producer recipient Ray (8)
- 15 First in death, brought film closer to people (2)
- 16 William coast for cap, Al (4)
- 17 Hires on: others with high society (5)
- 18 Briefly, Paramount's favorite picture (2)
- 19 "The death of death new set", he said (5)
- 20 New money north (7)
- 21 Dig — get ready (7)
- 22 and 23 Simon: What man's Oswald brother (2, 2)
- 24 Parody's real sample, repeated these films — karatobodies, they were (4)
- 25 Looked from Indiana (5)
- 26 Statue not usually addressed by movie (4)
- 27 To get the computer with detectors, even set on *The Third Man* (4)
- 28 Right arm-hat costume Ben likes to do post, we have (5, 6)
- 29 Not as natural as snow, but one up the story well (4)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1 Not just another pretty leg, but company empty parts (20)
- 2 City so to speak, through the looking glass (1, 4, 4, 2)
- 3 Mixed up before to what? (made sounds of it) (4)
- 4 From an old producer, a research tool for engines, the ladies' man, too (10)
- 5 Brown on and right, Bayesian took one or even got a lot more (4)
- 6 First war photo, time turned (10)
- 7 Miss Marlowe? Never Wally for the money was Peter Lurie (1)
- 8 Fred's "Looky" (7)
- 9 New army series name isn't so (4)
- 10 Essential for Westerns — try it in a movie (4)
- 11 Comes hard and soft (4)
- 12 Very unusual until social difficulty (9)
- 13 out of focus (2, 2)
- 14 Half on one (4)
- 15 Half of odd pair has affinity for glasses (10)
- 16 Cow calls backward fast quick way to connect one and for (4)
- 17 Postcard toward India? S. on ground — a south beach (7)
- 18 In the sound of it, wouldn't you join a guy in a theory that could have with no (7)
- 19 Often as much as the head blacks and (4)
- 20 For wacky angles, Ford's Ford (7)
- 21 Fry for process in ship, as boat. Ref: 548, W3/7, Q41/P41
- 22 Would take all 'A' actor expressed in (14)
- 23 Nerves for Richard and all at his (14)
- 24 Brief for film outfit, quick to break up for profits (2)

(Solution on p. 9) ★

## The Industry Comments

Continued from p. 51

Robert have been burned in the local film industry. One from, Koch, Tiley and Grev, first became involved in feature films with *Water of our Dreams* in 1981 and its success on a budget of less than \$400,000 encouraged the firm to continue in the field.

But despite this, and other successes and occasional setbacks, there has been an undeniable resurgence in this country in respect to major budgets in production (see *Loids*, *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie*, *Alvin Purple*, *Patience*, *Blame and Sweeney Two Far Away* cost less than \$300,000; *Perks in Hanging Rock*, *Cuddle*, *Don's Farm*, *Storm Boy*, *Water of our Dreams* and *Mad Max* cost less than \$400,000; *The Man from Hong Kong*, *Breaker Morahan*, *My Brilliant Career*, *Newcastle and Puberty Blues* cost less than \$1 million. Beyond that level, *Gallop*, *Mad Max 2* and *The Mission Sweeney River* have increasingly recruited their budgets and others will. It seems to me to be prudent to propose production firms whose budgets exceed the return on *The Man from Sweeney River*.

Nevertheless, one doesn't need a license to be a film producer. It is still a matter of working one's name on a door with "producer" written underneath it. There is no regulatory body controlling the industry nor will there be; the market forces are playing an evermore emphasis on low-budget and innovative films, which I, for one, welcome.

Many filmmakers in Australia behave like pampered children demanding a status equivalent to that of directors while doing considerably less to alleviate human misery. Those with the skills to produce a *Mad Max*, a *Gallop* or a *Sweeney River* are few and far between. There is no logical course of development from bargain-basement filmmaking to low-budget production, except that of the Peter Pantrap.

I hope that no one denies that the bipartisan government support offered to the film industry is motivated by the English-speaking press' infatuation with Australian films. This infatuation has lasted since 1973, far longer than the reigns of Japanese, Swedish, French and Canadian cinema.

Australians are continuing to pursue the elusive "international" market, of course, but this year they are doing so with fewer overseas "box-office" stories and "hand-on-down" American scripts. I hope to do as large as possible the day when I am again exposed to the negative effect of other filmmaking endeavors that I said to be a producer. The day will come, of course, but I hope later rather than sooner.

## Tax

Andrew Martin

Cinema Director

## The Rules of the Only Game in Town

It is a marvellously reasonable suggestion to draw on some of the grumblings observations of Darius Kozmin when discussing Film Investment Tax incentives. As the reader apprehends escape from the slums at the bottom of the harbor and contemplate a "Wardway"

writing, those of us who better remember a time when talk of tax deductibility for film investment was causing the concept of the self-indulgence. Now to talk otherwise is to dispense what his belief in conventional practice the life-blood of the industry. The game has become respectable. All of this, it would seem, will take, and perhaps sooner than even the most pessimistic suspect.

One is seduced by an examination of the future of tax deductibility in the Australian film industry. Without drawing on the person of a crystal ball or spit check's attitude, it is possible to detect trends in the development of thinking of those directly responsible for the implementation of the basic rules. Interpretation of the rules is, however, a matter of personal taste.

From the point of view of the observer, there are three significant aspects of the present administration of Division 168A that offer hints as to the future. The first involves a somewhat long-winded view that tax deductions does not exist. Before anyone reaches for his lobbying phone, there is no apparent intention on the part of the Tax Commissioner or his officers to apply this weakness in the drafting so hampers the overstated opinion. On the contrary, to do so would be tantamount to an admission that the Public Service had allowed the Parliament to enact meaningless legislation.

The argument goes this way:

1. To obtain a deduction, an investor has to notify the Commissioner that at the time he invested there was in force a deduction from a Producer.
2. The legislation provides what is to be said to the investor, including a statement that investor's funds have been invested.
3. It also states that a deduction is in force only after the time that it is provided to the Commissioner.
4. Obviously, therefore, the deduction could not have been in force at the time the investor made his investment.

The second reason in the mind is a hint provided when the state of deduction was changed August 1981. It was explained that by cutting back the deduction from 130 per cent to 175 per cent the Treasury would "save" \$5 million. The conclusion one would expect to draw from this is that the government felt it was over-allocating film to the tune of \$5 million in indirect subsidies. But the conclusion is faulty; this over-allocating has been replaced by a \$5 million direct subsidy. This appears to be as putting a piece of political development as one is likely to see in a lifetime. The non-existent logic denies explanation on its own terms, and the very criticism of the \$5 million direct subsidy is correct. Senator McCarthy's estimates of the number of co-investors in Australian government employ (21) have the names and phone numbers of the groups who will not invest \$5 million if this last incentive is reduced . . . .

Thirdly, the reduction from 150 per cent to 175 per cent can be demonstrated mathematically to be a means of discouraging the 46 per cent tax bracket investor (i.e., the corporate sector). The true motive for the 17 per cent reduction has nothing to do with the announcement creating a \$5 million fund.

The third and last indicator is the introduction of new sets of what I refer to as "non-maker" governing the availability of the deduction. This is worthy of comment with "15 day rule". This states that money that is not needed but to be paid back to the Trust Fund after 15 days. If not paid back, it is assigned the money is not used for direct production purposes. This quantum leap of logic has been used as a basis for the enforcement of an extra-

ordinary rule that by its very implementation means the figures extracted by the Department of Home Affairs can never reflect the level of film investment, only the turnover of that investment. The important thing to note, however, is that this rule does not exist at law. It is not a regulatory or legislative rule and, in fact, until recently existed solely as a statement of the opinion of the Department of Home Affairs as to what that Department thought the opinion of the Commissioner of Taxation might be.

The industry has much to fear in the relatively near future if its incentives are to be seen as the basis of its conditions of production. To a certain extent, the incentives were always justifiable on the basis of the positive discrimination that applied against film investment in Australia by comparison with foreign competitors and with other art forms. That discrimination is reflected both in international Double Tax treaties which effectively disadvantage the investor's country of origin and in land-subsidy, until recently recognized, errors in legislation that handed control of Australia's distributions to foreign conglomerates.

The arguments are now wanting thus: Australia is currently conditioned against speculative investment, but the gradual implementation of the recommendations of the Knight Report, even if modified forms, are aimed at long-term reversal of that attitude. Rex Connor was going to buy back the firm with money provided by Timoth Kholodis. Bob Hawke seems keen to acquire it on a lease-back from international banks on condition they come here and site Western and the ANZ out of their complacency in Australia. To correct all investment industries into the kind of a free market.

The three indicators lead me to a few tentative conclusions. The drafting of the legislation implementing the 150 per cent and the 175 per cent deduction has been carried out in such a fashion that it seems inconceivable in the law would have any implications for the investor without destroying half a dozen rare forests. That, coupled with an attitude that first of all rejected, and later embraced, the concept of a Trust Fund, seems to indicate that the "Campbell Principle" is in force. For those not familiar with the workings of the Campbell Principle is a doctrine that states if a government is to continue to exist in a great measure for a purpose, if the personnel of that Department are under-employed, there must be something for them to do.

It is a corollary of the Campbell Principle that the last one to teach it is responsible. The Department of Home Affairs was the last one to teach the film industry it is responsible for providing the money to the person who specifies that politicians say "How much is this going to cost?" An answer has to be found even if the basis of the answer is ignorance. The Trust Fund provides that basis. Now, if a politician wants to reduce the level of deductibility he can state with accuracy that the reduction is justifiable in his mind as to "Government figures". Here is the politician who is in a state of mind to be changing down on red dogtags while simultaneously entering filmmaking at a level "appropriate to the state of the economy".

In other words, the Public Service, or these responsible in this particular area, want legislation to without them control over the industry as far as possible. Government control is an explanation for the incomprehensible nature of the legislative. Government control is an explanation for the assistance of the extraordinary Trust Fund Government control explains the \$5 million fund to the APC, which

government control explains the enforcement of non-rules. If someone wants to investigate the Commissioner, there are plenty of shuffling blocks available to be placed in the path of the inquiry.

More than one senior member of the Treasury is reported to have greater control by Treasury over the activities of other government departments. The implementation of this legislation reflects this style of governing. The film industry will gradually find itself in a position where back-benchers, no longer shielded by agendas in *Time* and *Newsworld* about the "little white industry" down under, have to the economic wisdom of the Treasury. The winds of change will blow cold around the doors of those who claim "total freedom" status. In an economic climate that encourages the flow of investment only to all sectors, the film industry could find itself the enemy of those who claim a shot of the same color. The first writing appeared on the wall when the "creative industries" lobby called for similar incentive to aid its growth. Unless the film industry acts in the future closer to represent the sector of considerable export earnings, the competition will, over a period of time, be reduced from 135, to 125, and then to 110 or 100 per cent.

at least. This has certainly not been the case, as actress Jacki in *Shed* bluntly says, have been quick to point out. The actual number of films about women has been few. Actors Equity has been looking at a way of evaluating the proportion of significant female roles in Australian cinema, a study which would doubtless produce depressing results.

In the independent filmmaking scene, however, women have been much more visible. In the last 10 years, at the 1983 Sydney Film Festival's Greater Union Awards for short films, winning films in all four categories had women directors. Jackie McKinnon directed the marvellous short drama *Station*. Robin Anderson co-directed the documentary *First Contact*, and Helen Graue wrote and directed the best film in the general section and the Russian Mosaic award winner, *Serious Underlying*.

The resurgence of Australian filmmaking activity in the early 1970s coincided, of course, with the second wave of feminism. At that time, many women were attracted to film as a means of disseminating feminist ideas and exploring women's place in society. Feminism has continued to be an influential element within independent and alternative film culture with regard to film practice, theory and distribution, as well as film product.

It was in the early 1970s that the Sydney Women's Film Group made several short "feminist" films, such as *Just Therapy* and *Martha Aspin's Film for Discussion* (1970), and, in 1974, the group organized the first of several women's film workshops. These were a series of 30 films, including *What's the Matter with Sally* (1974) and *The Message* (1974) of *Charles Stauder* (1974). A women's film group was also active in Melbourne about the same time and, in Adelaide in 1975, Penny Chapman produced four short films directed by women in a package entitled *121*, as the South Australian Film Corporation's contribution to the International Women's Year.

The International Women's Year Secretariat funded several women's films during 1975, as well as a memorable, international Women's Film Festival. An enduring legacy of International Women's Year was the Women's Film Fund (WFF). A sum of \$100,000 had been allocated to, but not taken up by, Germany Gero, for a series on human reproduction. After negotiation by Sydney women, the \$100,000 was set aside as a permanent source of finance for future women's film work. The WFF now operates under the auspices of the Australian Film Commission and has supported many fine films over the years, such as *Pass and Notion* (1980), *Compassion Price* (1976), *Groceries from Wedgwood* (1982) and *Age Before Beauty* (1980).

The WFF has also been responsible for initiatives in relation to distribution of women's films, research, training and employment. It was instrumental in the organization of Women in Film and Television associations in several cities, and has recently established a women's film unit at Film Australia, under a Commonwealth Employment Program grant. Throughout the 1970s women have produced a body of excellent short, low-budget films. Although few have followed the feminist film theorists' urge to develop a new and distinct "feminist" film language to counter dominant cinema modes, there have been many clear and forceful issue-oriented documentaries such as *The Selling of the Female Image* (1979), *Red Heart Patients* (1980), *Short Subjects* (1980), *Close to the Door* (1977), *The New Attractive Man* (1981), and *Love, Breakfast in Paradise* (1982), personal and political films

such as *Maddox* (1978), and *My Survival as an Aboriginal* (1978). These films are widely circulated, and, although, usually through the Australian Film Institute or the Sydney Film-makers Co-operative, which has for many years paid special attention to the promotion of women's films, and captures a woman's film work.

Given the number of outstanding short films directed (and created) by women, one wonders why there have not been more women engaged as directors, or in other key creative and technical roles, in the commercial scene. The 1981 survey found that the majority of women working in independent films wanted to work on feature film, incidentally, the reverse was the case for women working in feature. But the obstacles are many and varied: old-fashioned prejudice, career creation amongst investors and producers marginalizing changing female demands; for women it is harder to get a firm job in an area that is not traditionally female; many independent female jobs don't lead on to key creative or technical positions; and ensuring social circumstances make it difficult for women to persevere in an industry with such long hours and irregular work.

The findings of the survey referred to earlier that 85 per cent of women working in feature or independent film did not have children in their care (compared with 1981 Census figures in which 75 per cent of Australian women were then 35 years-old have borne children) must also provide a clue to a major problem. Better childcare services and more equitable sharing of childcare in relationships are necessary.

After viewing on film the 30 feature films that made up last year's total output, and seeing the awful array of films, female stereotypes that were scheduled out in many of these films, one feels some urgency to ensure that women's experience and viewpoint is more adequately represented in our popular cinema, as well as in independent film. Mainstream film can be an influential reflector and moulder of our culture. The commitment, the flare, the passion, the anger, and the righteousness of analysis and representation that have been the strength of independent women's film work in this past decade could also have been a strength within mainstream Australian cinema, creating a greater slice to the social riches film produced for the "happy young men" in Britain in the 1960s.

Women must be given a greater voice in Australian cinema in the 1990s. ★

## Women in Australian Film

Vicki Molloy

Director, Creative Development, Film Australia

In December 1983, the Women's Film Fund in conjunction with the Australian Film and Television School released a report entitled, *Women in Australian Film Production*. Adapting the male-to-female breakdown of Cinema Papers news items since 1974, and the responses of 400 women film workers about their employment and training experiences and needs, the report painted a less than rosy picture of women's representation in the entertainment of the Australian film industry, pointing back to the misconception that "women run the industry".

One does not need research to know that only six film directors between 1974 and 1982 had directed a *Movie* feature film (Gillian Armstrong), although a few others have made low-budget, *Home* features. But it was alarming to find that no women had received credits as director of photography or sound records on feature films, and that only 4.5 per cent of feature editors have been women.

The overall proportion of women employed in feature production did increase from 12 per cent to 16 per cent between 1974 and 1982, but this figure is still 30 per cent lower than the proportion of women in the workforce as a large. The majority of women, furthermore, were still clustered in "traditional" female roles such as make-up, hairdressing, production secretary and continuity. Interestingly, only 10 per cent of all producer positions on feature films in this period of the study had been held by women. The outstanding success of *Passion*, *Love*, *Long*, *Margaret Pick*, *Bill Rath* and several others would have one assume a much higher proportion of producers were female.

The success of several feature films focusing on female characters in the Australian film renaissance — e.g., *Caddy* (1976), *Passion* at *Hanging Rock* (1975), *The Getting of Wisdom* (1977), *Passion* (1981) and *My Brilliant Career* (1979) — may have led one to believe that women are well represented on the screen,

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## Street Kids

Continued from p. 25

element is that the police had that evening, whether it was a dramatic fight or something more dramatic. The masculinity and the power of these boys is overwhelming. It is the rawness and the documentary filmmaking.

We have used that technique on overruns in *Street Kids*, and it has come over very strongly. But apart from that, I don't think that anything is particularly reflected in it, except a belief that it had to be filmed directly and spontaneously.

Tolson: For me there was an element of New Journalism in the filmmaking process. So often the events, the unexpected, took over, just as in New Journalism the reporter is dominated by what is subjectively happening to him. It is also not dissimilar in style to the work of American documentary filmmakers such as Frederick Wiseman, D. A. Pennebaker and films such as *Gimme Shelter*, and the cinema verité films.

Chadwick: As filmmakers, you have to decide on what general approach you are going to take in terms of making it as realistic as possible, and trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the audience, and then just follow it subjectively.

Scott: There's not to say that there is no element of performance in it, because there is. The kids turned on incredibly powerful performances, some of which were too powerful to remain in the film, either because of language or because the kids decided to modify what they had said. For example, one kid whose father had been sexually assaulting her was extremely angry and vowed her rage openly. But later on she decided to modify her voice because she didn't want to bring controversy with the family. She wanted to have some serious open for reconciliation. We had to take all these sorts of things into account.

Tolson: We were also aware of the sort of audience for which we were making the film. There were some more mature, devastating scenes that happened, but we all went twice that our purpose was to make a film for a general audience on what it feels like to be homeless. I think that is a positive aspect of the film is the extent we used to get these things across and reach out to an unselected audience.

How effective do you think the film can be in actually changing attitudes or in changing these kids' predicament?

Chadwick: I have gone beyond the point now where I think that films or books can automatically solve these problems. It would be

very naive to think that. There is no way any of us think that *Street Kids* is going to solve the problem society has at the 1980s. And, in the long run, it is not necessarily going to help any of the kids who were in it. But certainly it is at least going to make a large section of society aware that the problem exists.

It may also help a lot of kids who may go down that path, because there is nothing very rare at all about what you see in the film sequences, in the prostitution sequences, in all the sequences, these kids are basically normal. "Help, I don't really want to be in this situation," so, while it will not solve the problem, it will make some contribution to general awareness.

One direct conclusion that the film has made has been the formation of the Homeless Youth Veterans in Irish kids in a more sympathetic way...

Scott: The reaction we observed at preliminary screenings was the deep personal impact of the film. People would go quiet for a while, then someone would get up and started talking about it. This personal response has been very encouraging and has always led to a discussion of the issues the film raises. Some of these reactions have been extremely positive, and some have been negative.

Chadwick: For the police, which included eight high-ranking officers in the Victorian Police Department, it was a case of a case of a case. Not that women individual members of the police force weren't aware of specific aspects of the problem, but it was the first time that they had seen it concentrated in a coherent way. The severity of the situation came through for the first time. As a result of the film, the Special Delinquency Unit was formed.

Scott: What they saw was that these kids were normal, with normal emotions, but caught up in a situation outside the normal bounds of society. They could see that they were not freaks or deviants. And because they were being treated to a discussion by the kids, via the film, they could see the need for a greater sensitivity in treating the kids through the system.

Chadwick: The Police Department reacted very positively, but, as far as the Community Welfare Department, the services from officials were wanted. The only suggestion we would make from this comparative silence was that nobody in the department was prepared to make a statement, one way or the other, presumably because of the official implications of being so.

On the other hand, when we showed the film to a number of independent social workers and

organizations, they were more noticeably impressed.

It seems that, in some groups at least, the film is perceived as a threat...

Chadwick: Yes. But it was not recognized there. In my view, the film doesn't offer a threat to the Department of Community Welfare Services.

Scott: It raised the issue of responsibility, and the way that responsibility was being handled was being questioned. And I guess because there is no strong presence in the film by Community Welfare Department officials — and this is simply because we did not come across them in our journey — they felt vulnerable. We didn't ask out to slap them. We certainly could have made quite an indictment of that department by using some of the material we had shot, but we didn't.

The kids had made some personal remarks about official welfare workers, and in general it is a whole new area to look at. But we are not asking ourselves up to be experts in the field and, hopefully, as a result of the film being made, some more qualified people will be able to do something about the problem.

The social worker shown in the film seems to be a very positive force, even though social workers have been criticized for their work in such situations...

Chadwick: But the it is outside the bureaucratic system. The problem is that most social workers are becoming by the bureaucratic system that employs them. Ann McDonald made one very accurate remark about social workers right at the beginning. He said that it is no good running a service operation from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. while the street is asleep. These kids need support and back-up after the official 9 to 5 government department working day. And it is people like Alex and Linda — who, in a way, is an independent social worker — who can really give them support. If you are not there when the kids have the problems, then you are of no use to them whatsoever.

If you are looking for solutions, you realize there are so many closed doors and social agencies who don't provide accommodation, employment who are reluctant to offer jobs, families whose doors remain closed...

Tolson: This is the harder than all. The kids would often say that they feel on the outside of society, fenced into this situation through circumstances. "Now, how do I get out? How do I find somewhere to sleep? How do I find food to eat? How do I find a way to get out of the door, just to get started?" And there are many things that trap them, which

means that most stay out there overnight.

The real tragedy is this constant rejection of the society. Scott: This is why they say, "Why not get out hitting match for the rest of it and for the way it smells the smell?" In so many ways that becomes a normal activity along with eating, sleeping and getting money. If the door is closed, what is the policy of knocking against it?

Chadwick: You can see that in the film when several of the kids express the wish to die. When one of them is asked, "When do you think you're going to die?", he says, "Well, I think I'm going to die in my bedroom." So you ask him, "Why's that?" And by this stage he has a score on his face. It is a sort of check-out question: he is looking ahead, but he can't see anything.

Tolson: In some ways, dying is not really a bad option. There are many things that have happened to kids that are as tragic as dying. And there are other situations when there is no way out. In fact, eight kids who were in some way associated with the film have died since it was started.

Scott: It should be added that the film is not a drop of the crystal. There is a lot of positive perception in the film, even though some of it leads towards the cynical. We do see that these kids are as bright and spontaneous as any of the kids leading a normal life.

Given the long time making the film, it must have been frustrating to have to wait so long to have it shown publicly...

Chadwick: The experience of making *Street Kids* has, for all of it, raised two questions: just how much can be said and filmed about very sensitive issues which are indicative of the time in which we live; just how far you can go with or without the support of the people about whom the film is about, and to what extent filmmakers in the 1980s are compromised and prevented from putting on film a reality that society doesn't want to see.

Scott: You can go to Afghanistan, or away from your immediate environment, and shoot something that shows blood and guts and people dying in the streets. However, as soon as you show something which is as horrific but which is in your own environment, you face a lot of resistance that has to do with the position of the people who are seeing it. This is the difference in making a film on issues that are too close to home.

Chadwick: It should be noted that right through the controversy and the pressures that have been brought to bear on us, as filmmakers, and the kids, we have all stood firm in not compromising the film in any way. And we didn't intend to show it to be compromised. ■

# Street Kids

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## David Stevens

Continued from p. 15

Edmund Hillary, I could never climb Mt Everest. But I would love to feel that one day I would make a film that would open up visions of a world as much as the conquest of Mt Everest did. Well, anything is possible. Man is capable of anything. And man is not a chauvinist term. [Laughs.]

"Undercover" seems a very Australian film: the Great White Trick, the push for local industry, the arguments with inspectors. Why?

Well, it is a very tongue-in-cheek form of nationalism. There is still a huge cultural crisis in Australia. We still insist that our heroes have to be recognized overseas before we recognize them here. What Fred Shear was trying to do was simply say, "Bigger & We are here, and we need to be ashamed of ourselves." I believe the same thing.

Equally, I believe that an excess of nationalism can lead to the excesses of Nazi Germany. So the patriotism, the joyism, in *Undercover* is very tongue-in-cheek. It says be proud of who you are and proud of Australia, but don't take it too seriously.

It seems somewhat ironic that the success of the *House of Boys* is based on the selling of feminism...

Sell them their dreams? Why not. It is better than selling them reality, isn't it?

There is something morally dubious about it...

Well, let's say and work it out. We have just come from an age where women were trapped in whitehouse. Society moves slowly, so one can't jump straight from being trapped in whitehouse to burning her hair. So, when one goes down to the slums rather than the whitehouse, it has to be made to look glamorous. One has to sell women their dreams. Surely that is a step forward.

I agree that the selling of artificial dreams is wrong. The selling of a totally unromanticized view of the world in which no kind of reality straddles is deeply, awfully wrong.

The next film I am due to write is called *Adrian*, which I will direct. It is an attempt to try and examine Australia's relationship with the Third World in general, and specifically the Black Third World in southeast Asia. One could do a horrendous documentary about this, which 10 people would see, but I intend to do it as a love story. So in that sense I am selling people their fantasies, but I include with a hard core of reality. I



Director (Gloria Nesham) and actress (Gina Mignone) *The Chink*

am using the form of the love story to attempt to get across a potent message.

With "The Chink" you manage to weave fluidly between comedy and drama. The subject is controversial, yet the film is accessible, educative and funny. What do you see as the differences between directing comedy and drama?

I am somewhat of the Australian obsession with historical documentary or documentary fact, but I am also deeply concerned with the obsession of dividing things into comedy and drama. What is the difference?

Laughing?

You cry and you also laugh with *A Town Like Alice*. Life isn't one thing; nobody's life is tragic or comic. The greatest cinema are those who make you cry when they slip on a banana skin and yet you're laughing at the same time. The greatest tragedies are those who make you laugh with the character first because you recognize the humanity of the character.

If you take Katherine Oliver's Richard III, you actually think that Richard is a jolly, cheerful and funny chap, then he starts doing those terrible things. You are forced to see an audience to make a moral evolution of the character, and that is the only thing that is interesting to me in drama. I hate the single close-up. I believe an audience should be given a choice on a screen of depicting where they want to look as I lead and guide.

My favorite scene in *Undercover* is probably when the country boy, Frank (Nashley Linday), proposes to Libby. We're the one that you have everything that I believe about the cinema. You

I always go presently in East Africa on a two-week trip to do research for the film project.

have two characters on screen at the same time, and you have a range from broad comedy to drama when she turns away from him and he understands that she is saying no. Your heart bleeds for him.

There is also a very acute sense of that in "The Chink". You avoid the temptation of making a character look stupid in order to get a laugh, particularly with Wilms (Betty Bobbitt). Initially she wants to laugh at her or in patronize her, but then one is made to feel calm and gently Frank is "Undercover" is the same sort of character, make the country kangaroo, he could look stupid and naive and clumsy, but he isn't...

It comes back to what I believe about drama. The Wilms character in *The Chink* is a case of almost taking this too far. In the first decade of screening of *The Chink*, the audience stopped laughing when Wilms told them off, and didn't laugh again for the rest of the film. We were shocked, but that was the classic case. "I may be making a fool of myself," but I don't believe I deserve to be laughed at. That's the cry of every individual in the world.

A director doesn't have to do very much when he has a script and a cast like we had for *The Chink*. One of the things that I have about the film is that there are scenes in which only people who are into a particular social behavior will understand. For example, Helga (Evelyn Krupar) talks happily about racial sex. Nancy per one of the audience doesn't understand what she's talking about, but there will be a few beautiful laughs from women in the audience who know exactly what she is talking about. The rest of the audience may be bored by that scene, or puzzled, as they try and work out what the hell she's been up to the

night before. For the people in the audience who do understand what she's talking about, it is a stretching moment because that is probably the first time they have ever heard something they may feel guilty about being cheerfully ignorant in public. It's like Francis Truffaut's approach in *Day For Night*. There are jokes that only people who have worked on a film crew would laugh at.

That cinema with the exploration of Australian history and the past is recurrent in your work: "Breaker Morant", "The Saltbush", "A Town Like Alice"...

I suppose I take a revisionist view of history. There are people in society who try to make others criminals in their minds, not of behavior, and I will fight that, all the way down the line. If you believe the standard interpretations of history, then there was a time as some distant point in the past when everybody behaved according to the same values. But they never did. People have always been people, questioning and disobeying their rulers. So you have to take the revisionist view.

If Ned Shear were alive and could see the film of *A Town Like Alice*, I think what he would be most concerned in the film would be allowed Joan and Joe (Glynis Brown) to fornicate before they were married, because they specifically in the book that they did not.

If you want to present a total caricature of a person, you need show all aspects of character. One of the things I believe modern audiences needed to know was that men and for could sit on together, that that part of their relationship was good as well. But if I hadn't shown it at that point, we may have been seen as a case later on, after they were married. But there wasn't room for such a scene then because the drama was concerned with other things.

I don't expect everybody to like my film but I hope that some people will. I have been lucky over the past few years and I have made quite a lot of people have liked them. I would anticipate quite soon I will make a film very few people will like. Who wants to be caught on the road and of success? An essential thing for any artist is having the right to fail. The attitude of being regarded as a success is that people demand that you go on being a success. One of the problems for Charles Kingsford-Smith was that he flew around Australia for the first time, he flew across the Pacific for the first time, and he became the first man to completely circumnavigate the world by plane. What most could be possibly do? But the mob demanded more, and that, together with the bureaucracy, eventually destroyed him. ■

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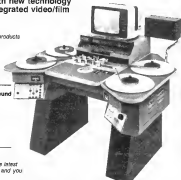
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Production Survey  
Continued from p. 8

Model no.	Power Source
Capacity	Constant
Length	10 000 000 cm
Weight	100 kg
Working mode	continuous

**Application** According to technology type, integrated circuit is used through a 1000-watt power supply. The integrated circuit provides a constant current and voltage, and the output voltage is adjustable. The output voltage is adjustable from 0V to 10V, and the output current is adjustable from 0A to 10A. The output voltage and current are adjustable through the potentiometer and the potentiometer is adjustable through the potentiometer.

## PLANNING FOR SYSTEMS

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## TABLE 10.10.1 (continued)

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